

FISCAL 2000 PERFORMANCE REPORT

CORPORATION

FOR NATIONAL



S E R V I C E

**ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED BY THE
NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT
AND THE
DOMESTIC VOLUNTEER SERVICE ACT**

MARCH 2001

Second Edition

About the Corporation for National Service

Created in 1993, the Corporation for National Service engages more than 1.5 million Americans annually in improving communities through service. The Corporation supports service at national, state, and local levels through:

- AmeriCorps, whose members serve with local and national organizations to meet community needs while earning education awards to help finance college or training;
- Learn and Serve America, which links community service and learning objectives for youth from kindergarten through college as well as youth in community-based organizations;
- The National Senior Service Corps (Senior Corps), the network of programs that helps Americans age 55 and older use their skills and experience in service opportunities that address the needs of their communities. Senior Corps includes the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), the Foster Grandparent Program, and the Senior Companion Program.

Board of Directors

Dorothy A. Johnson, Chairman
Grand Haven, Michigan

Carol Kinsley
Springfield, Massachusetts

Amy Achor
Waco, Texas

Leslie Lenkowsky
Indianapolis, Indiana

Juanita Sims Doty
Jackson, Mississippi

Arthur Naparstek
Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Thomas Ehrlich
Palo Alto, California

Marc Racicot
Helena, Montana

Toni Fay
New York, New York

Bob Rogers
Kansas City, Missouri

Christopher Gallagher, Sr.
Concord, New Hampshire

Alan Solomont
Newton, Massachusetts

Mark Gearan
Geneva, New York

Officers of the Corporation

Wendy Zenker
Chief Executive Officer (Acting)

Wendy Zenker
Chief Operating Officer

Luise Jordan
Inspector General

March 2001 Second Edition

Upon request, this material will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities.

CORPORATION

FOR NATIONAL

 SERVICE

2000

PERFORMANCE REPORT

Vision Statement

We envision a nation in which:

- service is promoted and valued by educational, religious, government institutions, business and labor, nonprofit organizations, and individuals, families, and communities throughout the nation.
- problems in communities are being solved through service - and service is a part of problemsolving initiatives in education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs.
- service helps people expand their sense of community so that they look first to themselves and to one another to improve their lives.
- active and informed citizenship is widespread - and service helps each American feel greater responsibility toward others.
- service is known and valued throughout the country because it has touched the lives of millions of Americans.
- service is viewed as a significant part of the transition to adulthood, and youths are viewed as important community resources.
- individual lives are improved through service.
- participants in service are widely honored - and deserve it - both while they serve and for the rest of their lives.
- service is defined, initiated, shaped, and coordinated at the community level.
- individuals find effective ways to engage in service throughout their lives - as children (with their families, through community organizations, and in their schools), and on through adulthood.
- service promotes partnerships at all levels of society and builds bridges among seemingly disparate groups to improve the quality of life of people in our nation.
- successful service endeavors are celebrated in the communities they serve and shared with other communities interested in learning from them.
- service is viewed as nonpartisan and as a form of civic action in which all people take pride.

We envision an organization that is:

- a catalytic, coordinating, and creative force in realizing this vision for service in America.
- a valuable resource to and a partner with national, state, and local organizations that seek to solve problems through service.
- entrepreneurial, innovative, effective, and efficient in utilizing its resources, influences, and activities.
- a good steward of taxpayer dollars that operates programs in a cost-effective manner.
- an agency with a demonstrated history of nonpartisanship.

This is the vision of the Corporation for National Service.

The Mission

The Corporation's mission is to provide opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service that addresses the nation's educational, public safety, environmental and other human needs to achieve direct and demonstrable results and to encourage all Americans to engage in such service. In doing so, the Corporation will foster civic responsibility, strengthen the ties that bind us together as a people, and provide educational opportunity for those who make a substantial commitment to service.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results achieved by the Corporation for National Service in fiscal 2000. The report is organized around the nine principal budget activities of the Corporation. The first section of the report covers the five program activities: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps, AmeriCorps*VISTA, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps. A second section includes four support activities: National Service Trust, Evaluation, Innovation, and Program Administration.

The Corporation for National Service's Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals

In its Strategic Plan, the Corporation envisions a nation in which service is valued, used to solve important problems, and rooted in community and individual responsibility. To achieve this vision, the Corporation defines its mission as providing opportunities for Americans of all ages and backgrounds to engage in service. The Corporation seeks to achieve its mission by fostering civic responsibility, strengthening the ties that bind us together as a people, and providing educational opportunities for those who make a substantial commitment to service.

The Corporation's strategic plan identifies four strategic goals for 1997-2002 as the focus for realizing the vision and mission. These goals are:

1. Help solve the nation's critical needs through service.
2. Strengthen communities through service.
3. Improve the lives of those who serve through their service experience.
4. Develop and maintain a sound, innovative organization that strengthens the service field.

The four strategic goals cross cut the nine principal budget activities of the Corporation, which contribute in different ways to achieving the strategic goals.

What the Corporation and Its Service Programs Got Done in 2000 to Meet the Strategic Goals: Some Examples

1. Helping solve the nation's critical needs through service.

- AmeriCorps tutoring programs reported positive and significant change for the students who receive tutoring. According to an independent study by Abt Associates, reported in 2000, AmeriCorps members tutored at least 100,000 students in first through third grades in program year 1999-2000. Abt concluded: "The tutored students at all grade levels improved their reading performance from pretest to post-test more than the gain expected for the typical child at their grade level. Reading comprehension and reading skills started out below grade-level; by year-end, students closed the gap and were reading at or near the grade-level expectation."
- AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps members were trained and certified in CPR, first aid, mass care, damage assessment, and family assistance, serving as part of the American Red Cross National Disaster Response Network. Fire fighting was also an important aspect of NCCC disaster response activities. In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, 16 percent of the entire Corps was red-card certified in a rigorous and challenging fire fighter training program. In 2000, NCCC members responded to floods, fires, hurricanes and other disasters, providing disaster relief to an estimated 33,500 people.

- AmeriCorps*VISTA helped bridge the digital divide. In the past year, the number of AmeriCorps*VISTA projects focused on technology issues grew from 18 to more than 100. AmeriCorps*VISTA members provided more than \$1.8 million in technology hardware, software, and services to 800 nonprofit agencies.
- AmeriCorpsVISTA supported more than 300 projects providing access to employment, self-employment, capital, and credit for thousands of low-income people seeking transition from welfare to self-sufficiency. AmeriCorps*VISTA's focus on the creation of economic opportunities for welfare recipients has expanded as part of its welfare-to-work initiative.
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program(RSVP) recruited executives over the age of 55 to provide management consulting services to private, nonprofit, and public agencies. They helped more than 6,000 local organizations to expand and improve their operations.
- Foster Grandparent Program oversaw the work of more than 28,000 Foster Grandparents as they served in schools, hospitals, drug treatment centers, correctional institutions, and Head Start and day care centers. They helped abused and neglected children, mentored troubled teenagers and young mothers, and cared for premature infants and children with physical disabilities. In all, the Corporation estimates that Foster Grandparents reached 230,000 children in need.
- The Senior Companion Program recruits and manages older, low-income persons who provide assistance to frail, homebound individuals, most of them elderly. These clients have difficulties with daily living tasks and Senior Companions help them retain their dignity and independence. In 2000, nearly 15,000 Senior Companions served an estimated 61,000 clients.

2. Strengthening communities through service.

- AmeriCorps programs – State and National, NCCC, and VISTA recruit and manage large numbers of community volunteers, providing the full-time oversight of intermittent volunteers that is often required to make effective use of this powerful, but underutilized local resource. For every NCCC member in service in fiscal 2000, thirty local volunteers served on NCCC projects. This represents an increase of 200 percent over fiscal 1999 levels. NCCC members led 2,000 student volunteers who spent their spring break on Habitat for Humanity Collegiate Challenge projects building houses for low-income families. According to an evaluation of project accomplishments, by Aguirre International, in one year approximately 5,000 AmeriCorps*VISTA members recruited more than 283,000 community volunteers who donated 6.6 million volunteer hours to projects. An earlier evaluation by Aguirre International, completed in 1997, found an average of eight community volunteers generated by each member of an AmeriCorps*State and National program.
- AmeriCorps*Promise Fellows provided leadership to hundreds of communities' efforts to expand, enhance, and improve the delivery of the resources needed by all young people as identified at the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in April 1997. Through the Promise Fellows program and in cooperation with America's Promise, the Corporation awarded 60 grants and enrolled 458 Promise Fellows.
- AmeriCorps*VISTA members serve in nonprofit organizations and agencies to develop new permanent infrastructure that aids and expands services, strengthens programs, and empowers low-income individuals. More than half of AmeriCorps*VISTA Sponsoring Organizations are small local organizations with less than ten professional staff. In 2000, AmeriCorps*VISTA partnered with nearly 1,200 nonprofit organizations ranging from small rural public schools and faith-based groups to national organizations. In addition,

the Corporation estimates each AmeriCorps*VISTA member generated \$15,400 of financial and in-kind support for project activities.

- Learn and Serve America awarded \$43,000,000 in grants for service-learning activities. Local school districts across the country are increasingly using service-learning as a means of meeting state academic standards. Local schools use service-learning activities to complement other national education programs, including School-to-Work and various titles of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Because of the positive impacts on students' learning, behavior, and civic attitudes, many educators view service-learning as an effective vehicle for educational reform.
- National Service-Learning Leader Schools is an initiative that recognizes schools for excellence in service-learning. Middle schools and high schools receive recognition for improving learning and teaching at their schools and strengthening their communities through high-quality, broad-based service-learning. The schools serve as models of excellence for two years by providing both awareness programs and professional development to other schools. In 2000, the Corporation named 66 schools as National Service Leader Schools.
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) supported more than 450,000 volunteers in fiscal 2000. The research firm ORC Macro conducted a survey of the community agencies serving as placement sites for these volunteers. ORC Macro found that the most prevalent reason agencies gave for using RSVP volunteers was to increase the quality of services that address community needs.

3. Improving the lives of those who serve through their service experience.

- The National Service Trust provides a secure repository for education awards earned by eligible participants who successfully complete a term of service in one of the three branches of AmeriCorps: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA. In 2000, 76.3 percent of all AmeriCorps members who ended their service during the year earned an education award ranging in value up to \$4,725. They can use the award to repay student loans, pay to attend school beyond high school, or pay expenses in a school-to-work program.
- AmeriCorps*State and National members gain significantly in "life skills," those competencies needed to function effectively in the modern workplace and social environment, according to a study by Aguirre International, completed in 1999.
- The President's Student Service Challenge, administered by the Corporation's Department of Service-Learning, offers an opportunity for schools, colleges, and community organizations to recognize young people for their outstanding community service and to encourage more young people to serve. More than 5,000 students received a \$1,000 President's Student Service Scholarship in 2000, recognizing outstanding service to their communities and at least 100 hours of service in a 12-month period.
- Service-Learning, according to numerous research studies, greatly benefits student participants. The research supports several generalizations about its impact on students. Service-learning has a positive effect on students' engagement in school. It helps students acquire academic skills and knowledge. It reduces the likelihood that students will engage in risk behaviors. And, service-learning enhances students' social and civic development.
- Disability Initiatives were a focus of the Corporation in 2000. The Corporation held a national conference for 400 people including representatives from national disability organizations, disability coordinators from state commissions, and program directors from AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and the Senior Corps. The conference served several purposes. First, the conference was a way to present tools and

techniques for effectively integrating people with disabilities into national service programs. Second, it increased the Corporation's understanding of how to collaborate with the disability community. And, third, it helped the Corporation to develop collaborative relationships with important disability organizations.

4. Developing and maintaining a sound, innovative organization that strengthens the service field.

- A Clean Audit for the Corporation was the conclusion of the auditors for fiscal 2000. For the first time, the Corporation received an unqualified opinion on its financial statements. This achievement resulted from a commitment to strong management control and accountability for financial resources.
- The State Administrative Standards Project was continued and expanded by the Corporation. This initiative sets administrative standards for state commissions on service. It helps the Corporation assess and expand the capacity of state commissions to administer federal funds in a responsible manner. In 2000, the Corporation reviewed nine states.
- The Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS) is a web-based, member enrollment and exit system for AmeriCorps*State/National Direct grantees and sub-grantees. In 1999, the system was expanded to permit programs to submit financial reports via the Internet. In 2000, the Automated Progress Report (APR) module was added to the system. It links member management, financial reporting, and the tracking of programmatic outcomes into a single management system. Through the APR, programs can produce periodic progress reports that inherit information from the financial and member-related functions of WBRS so that progress reporting becomes significantly automated.
- EpiCenter was launched by the Corporation in 2000. An effective practices information center, EpiCenter is a web-based searchable database of program practices, designed to help in creating and managing national service programs. Its purpose is to share timely, relevant information that will lead to sustainable programs and positive outcomes for program participants, beneficiaries, organizations, and communities.

Conclusion

Fiscal 2000 was a year of marked productivity for the Corporation for National Service and its programs. As this summary illustrates and the complete *Performance Report for Fiscal 2000* documents, national service accomplished great things for the American people. Critical needs of families and communities were directly addressed by the Corporation's service programs. Those who served saw their own lives enhanced and expanded. And, the service delivery system was strengthened through improvements to its financial management, program oversight, and technical assistance systems.

FISCAL 2000 PERFORMANCE REPORT CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
INTRODUCTION TO THE 2000 PERFORMANCE REPORT	1
An Output-Outcome Model for National Service.....	1
The Corporation's Performance Measurement System	2
PART I. NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAMS	
CHAPTER 1. AMERICORPS*STATE AND NATIONAL.....	7
Background.....	7
Program Initiatives in 2000.....	10
The State Administrative Standards Project	11
Getting Things Done.....	12
Customer Satisfaction	16
Expanding Opportunity.....	17
Increasing Responsibility.....	19
CHAPTER 2. AMERICORPS*NATIONAL CIVILIAN COMMUNITY CORPS	23
Outcomes	24
Disaster Relief.....	25
Serving with Community Volunteers	26
Expanding National Partnerships.....	27
Outcomes from Program Evaluation Studies.....	28
CHAPTER 3. AMERICORPS*VISTA.....	31
Overall Accomplishments.....	33
Program Initiatives in Fiscal 2000	33
Summer Activities	36
Service Accomplishments.....	36
Sustainability and Capacity Building in Low-income Communities	36
Cost-Share Production Model.....	38
Member Recruitment and Development.....	39
AmeriCorps*VISTAs and the Education Award.....	41
Customer Satisfaction	41
CHAPTER 4. LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA: K-12 SCHOOL-BASED, COMMUNITY- BASED, AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS	45
Service-Learning Defined.....	45
The Growth of Service-Learning.....	46
How the Corporation for National Service Supports Service-Learning	47
The Impact of Service-Learning on Students	50
Customer Satisfaction	52
CHAPTER 5. NATIONAL SENIOR SERVICE CORPS	55
A Vision of Senior Service for a New Century	55
Programming for Impact: Making a Difference in the Communities Served.....	56
The Second Senior Corps National Conference: "Making Our Mark"	56
Senior Demonstrations.....	57
A Network of National Alliances	57
Partnerships with Faith-based Communities	58
Administration and Management.....	59

THE RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP)	61
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Performance in 2000	61
Administrative Cost Increases to Relieve Resource Constraints in Local RSVP Projects.....	62
Customer Satisfaction	62
Why Community Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for RSVP Volunteers.....	63
THE FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM (FGP)	67
Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) Performance in 2000	67
Foster Grandparent Contributions to Young Children	67
Why Community Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for Foster Grandparents.....	68
Customer Satisfaction	68
THE SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM (SCP)	75
Senior Companion Program Performance in 2000	75
Why Community Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for Senior Companions	79
Customer Satisfaction	79
SENIOR DEMONSTRATIONS	83
Seniors for Schools National Demonstration: Focused On Child Literacy	83
Seniors for Habitat	84
Experience Corps for Independent Living	84
Senior Leaders	85

PART II: SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

CHAPTER 6. NATIONAL SERVICE TRUST	89
Trust Enrollment Activity	89
Earning and Using the Education Awards	92
Management of the National Service Trust	93
CHAPTER 7. EVALUATION	95
Descriptive Research	95
Outcome Research	97
Technical Assistance.....	98
Use of Evaluation Data	101
Data Sharing Policy	102
Discussion of Performance Attainment	102
CHAPTER 8. INNOVATION, DEMONSTRATION, AND ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES .	105
Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA)	105
AmeriCorps Recruitment	110
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Grants.....	112
Disability Programs	112
National Service Fellowship Program	113
Literacy Programs	114
CHAPTER 9. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION	119
Clean Audit for Fiscal 2000	119
Grants Management	121
National Service Trust	122
Expanded Access to Momentum	123
Year 2000 Computer Compliance	123

APPENDICES.....

Appendix A: Data Quality.....	127
Appendix B: GPRA Data Call.....	131

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2000 PERFORMANCE REPORT

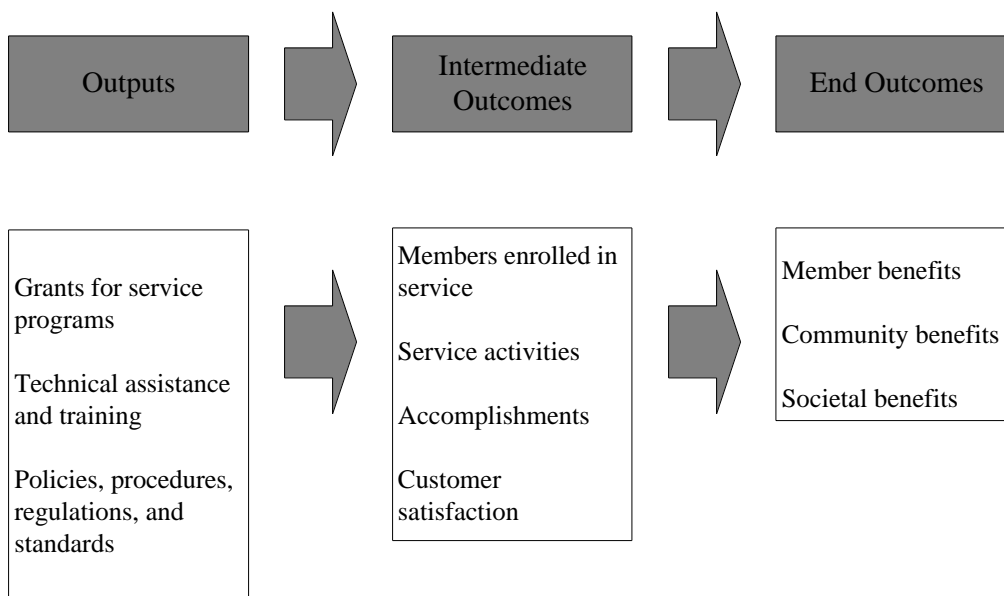
This is a summary of the work performed by the Corporation for National Service and the outcomes of the service provided by individuals enrolled in the programs supported by the Corporation. This report is the second annual performance report as required by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and the performance reported here generally occurred in fiscal 2000.

The report is organized around the nine principal budget activities of the Corporation, divided into two sections. The first section covers the five service program areas: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps, AmeriCorps*VISTA, Learn and Serve America, and the National Senior Service Corps. The second section includes four support activities: the National Service Trust, Evaluation, Innovation, and Program Administration.

An Output-Outcome Model for National Service

The Corporation for National Service distinguishes among several categories of measures that relate to its efforts and those of its service programs, ranging from outputs to outcomes (see Figure 1). In this performance report, the Corporation presents information for both the outputs from the direct effort of its employees and the outcomes of the service programs funded by the Corporation. For example, the chapter on AmeriCorps*State and National reports the number of grants and subgrantees (an output), the number of members enrolled (an intermediate outcome), and the impact of tutoring programs on students (end outcome).

**FIGURE 1. A GENERAL MODEL
OF OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES
FOR THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE**



In general, the closer a category is to being an end outcome, the more important it is in addressing significant national problems. Unfortunately, determining end outcomes is usually a complex and difficult measurement task. Frequently, complex evaluation studies are required to collect data on end outcomes and to analyze their effects. For this reason, the Corporation emphasizes in each program chapter the results of recent program evaluation research.

- The *outputs* presented in this report typically include numbers of grants, training and technical assistance activities, and management initiatives.
- *Intermediate outcomes* may cover numbers of members' enrolled, service activities, accomplishment data, and customer satisfaction.
- *End outcomes* include impacts on program participants, customer satisfaction, and community benefits. Whether or not an outcome is "intermediate" or "end" depends on the structure and intent of the program.

A graphic summary of performance results appearing at the beginning of each chapter presents a program-specific flow of performance from Corporation outputs to the end outcomes of the service activities.

The following table presents a quick guide to the definitions used by the Corporation for types of performance measures. Included are examples of each category of measurement.

Table 1. Categories of Performance Measures		
Category	Definition	Examples
Outcomes	Events or conditions that demonstrate achievement of a program's goals.	Changes in students' reading ability resulting from AmeriCorps literacy activities.
Intermediate Outcomes	Activities, events, or conditions that show progress toward achievement of the program's goals.	Number of members enrolled in AmeriCorps*State programs by sub-grantees of the state commissions.
Output	Products or services directly produced by employees of the Corporation.	Grants awarded to State Commissions, national non-profit organizations, tribes and territories to operate AmeriCorps*State and National programs.
Activities	The work by the Corporation that directly produces the output, its core products and services.	Regulations, policies, standards that guide the operation of AmeriCorps*State and National.
Input	Resources used by the Corporation to support its activities.	The fiscal 1999 federal appropriation for AmeriCorps*State and National.

The Corporation's Performance Measurement System

Each piece of data, whether output or outcome, comes from one of the four types of data that make up the Corporation's performance measurement system:

- Annual performance indicators
- Accomplishment reports
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Program evaluations.

Each of these data types is valid and useful for understanding program performance. If a data type were to be used alone, however, the analysis would be incomplete and misleading. A comprehensive understanding of program performance must use data from all five sources because each has strengths and taken together they complement each other.

Annual Performance Indicators

The Corporation has several data systems that it uses to collect information on a regular basis from grantees and subgrantees and from members of service programs. These systems gather data measuring aspects of program performance that is in the direct control of the Corporation. These data are useful for oversight and management of the programs. Many of these measures focus on what programs do with federal funds—such as carrying out projects, enrolling members, awarding subgrants, and so on.

In 1999, the Corporation completed a review of the data used in the annual performance indicators. The directors for every program and the managers of the data systems used by those programs have been interviewed concerning the quality of the data. They were asked to describe how the data and systems are checked for accuracy, verifiability, and validity. Appendix A of this report gives a brief characterization of the data quality for each indicator.

For this year's report, a new step was added to heighten program manager's investment in the quality of the data. When reporting performance on the annual indicators, each program manager was asked to certify the accuracy of the information being reported and to provide documentation supporting the results being reported. An example of the "Certification of Data Reliability" is included as Appendix B.

Accomplishment Reporting

Asking programs to report accomplishments allows them to quantify the contributions they are making toward meeting critical community needs. These counts of service performed (e.g., community buildings rehabilitated, students taught, and neighborhood watches conducted) tell a compelling story about the work of national service.

Accomplishment reports are prepared annually for AmeriCorps*State and National grantees and AmeriCorps*NCCC. AmeriCorps*VISTA and the Senior Corps programs are collecting accomplishment reports from project sponsors and grantees every other year. Due to the scale of the Senior Corps programs, their reports rely on a random sample of projects rather than a census.

Independent research contractors collect accomplishment data from AmeriCorps*State and National grantees, AmeriCorps*VISTA project supervisors, and Senior Corps project sponsors. AmeriCorps*NCCC campus staff report accomplishment data directly to the Corporation. The data collection uses standard forms that allow for aggregation of the data nationally. Through the years the reporting forms have undergone several rounds of revision and standardization. Project directors and sponsors complete the report forms, based on their own systems for keeping records of activities and accomplishments. The Corporation has provided extensive technical assistance in this area to ensure that projects and grantees know how to do it correctly.

The data are subject to edit checks, range checks, and other tests of reasonableness by the research contractors. The data are, however, self-reports from grantees and project sponsors, dependent on the accuracy and completeness of the tracking systems they maintain. In most cases, the data are not subject to audit or other, less formal reviews by independent investigators.

Accomplishment reporting simply asks local programs to tell the Corporation what they got done in a structured way that can be aggregated for an estimate of national-level program effort.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys

The Corporation's programs have many customers: program participants, grantees, community residents receiving services, and local and state governments. Gathering customer perspectives on how well their needs are met is an essential part of the Corporation's commitment to continuous quality improvement. Targeted customer satisfaction surveys are conducted periodically, asking direct customers -- the grantees and program participants -- how well the Corporation is meeting their needs. This year the performance report is relying on information collected in 1999.

ORC Macro International conducted all the customer satisfaction surveys used in this report. They used generally accepted and rigorous survey techniques to select samples, construct the questionnaires, and report the findings.

Program Evaluation Studies

Program evaluation represents a significant area of investment by the Corporation. Unlike the other performance measures, outcome evaluation studies are not likely to occur every year because they are more expensive and time consuming to carry out. Program outcome studies, however infrequent, still provide highly reliable, valid and useful information on what national service programs achieve for the American people. And, to the degree that the basic model for a program remains constant, the results of program evaluation research will remain valid and useful.

One reason the Corporation places so much importance on program evaluation lies in the relationship the Corporation has with its national service programs and their outcomes. The Corporation supports national service almost exclusively by making grants to nonprofit, private, and public institutions. These grantees, in turn, use federal funds and guidance, combined with other sources of support, to design and operate service programs meeting locally defined needs.

Working through these networks of grantees, subgrantees, community sponsors, and other partners to accomplish the Corporation's mission means that the outcomes of national service programs are often the result of factors outside the Corporation's control. These complex systems make it challenging to identify the federal contribution to the end outcomes. Individual program evaluations, by using formal, scientific methods, including sampling and control groups, can identify the direct results and impact of national service programs.

The Corporation believes that, with focused, scientific, independent program evaluations, the results of service programs can be accurately identified and measured. The Corporation contracts with the best research organizations in the country, then gives them the independence and resources to do reliable and valid studies of national service programs (see Chapter 7. Evaluation). A formal policy (Corporation for National Service Policy Number 900) governs evaluation activities in the Corporation. It sets stringent standards that ensure the quality of the studies conducted on the Corporation's behalf. In addition, there is growing interest in national service and service-learning on the part of universities, foundations, and public interest groups. Thus, in addition to the contract research sponsored by the Corporation, this report will include findings from individuals and organizations working independently of the Corporation and its support.

PART I. NATIONAL SERVICE PROGRAMS

Chapter 1. AmeriCorps*State and National

Chapter 2. AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps

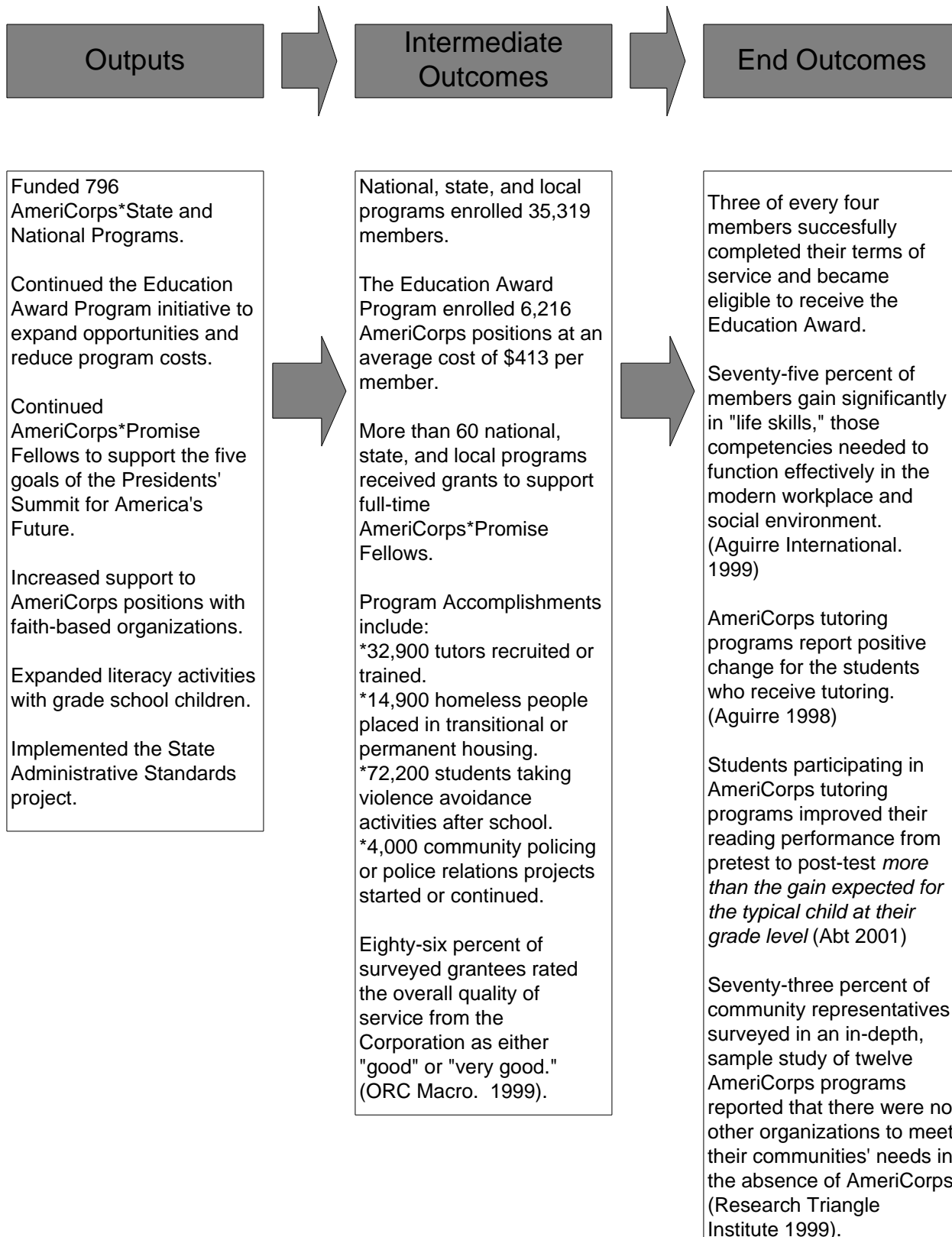
Chapter 3. AmeriCorps*VISTA

Chapter 4. Learn and Serve America

Chapter 5. National Senior Service Corps

AMERICORPS*STATE AND NATIONAL GRANTS

2000 PERFORMANCE RESULTS



CHAPTER 1. AMERICORPS*STATE AND NATIONAL

AmeriCorps offers full- and part-time opportunities for members to provide intensive service to meet community needs and, in exchange, to earn education awards. AmeriCorps is community-based, structured to respond to local needs and concerns, and designed to meet the following four goals, which parallel the strategic goals of the Corporation for National Service:

- **Getting Things Done.** AmeriCorps helps communities meet critical needs in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, and other human needs through direct service.
- **Strengthening Communities.** AmeriCorps unites a diverse group of individuals and institutions in a common effort to improve communities through service.
- **Improving the Lives of Those Who Serve.** AmeriCorps helps those who help America. Individuals who serve become better citizens. National service also uses the GI Bill model. In exchange for service, AmeriCorps members earn a scholarship that helps pay for college, training, or student loans.
- **Supporting Service Infrastructure.** Grantees and programs operate efficiently and effectively, using reinventing government principles and appropriate management systems.

Background

AmeriCorps*State and National funding, by statute, supports service programs in three ways. First, State Commissions receive a portion of the funds. These commissions are governor-appointed, bipartisan, and represent the important service constituencies in the state. One-third of the funds appropriated by Congress goes to the commissions according to a population-based formula. In 2000, 374 programs received funds under the state formula distribution, an increase of 120 over fiscal 1999. At least one-third of the funds goes to State Commissions for programs (217 programs in 2000) that the state commissions select and then submit to the Corporation for competitive consideration.

Second, National Direct grants go to national non-profit organizations and programs operating in more than one state. In 2000, there were 39 active National Direct grantees, two less than in 1999. No essential change is anticipated in the level of activity because Congress set a limit on the funds that the Corporation could grant to national non-profit organizations, beginning with fiscal 1996.

Third, two percent of AmeriCorps grant funds are set aside for Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories, (one percent each). The Corporation awards grants to Indian Tribes on a competitive basis and to U. S. Territories on a formula basis. The Corporation granted ten Tribal awards and four awards to grantees in Territories of the United States, the same as in 1999 for both categories. A new tribal initiative, the Tribal Civilian Community Corps (TCCC), was developed based on the suc-

AmeriCorps members with Habitat*AmeriCorps built 484 homes for low-income families during the 1999-2000 program year. Members supervised more than 57,000 construction volunteers, ensuring safety on site. The members' leadership was particularly valued during Collegiate Challenge, when over 1,000 college students volunteered at Habitat for Humanity during their spring break. Without the leadership of the AmeriCorps members, Habitat for Humanity would not have been able to host this large number of volunteers.

successful AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) model. TCCC programs will be residential corps serving Indian Country and begin operation in fiscal 2001.

Table 1-1. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for AmeriCorps*State and National, Fiscal 2000			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of members enrolled. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> . ¹	43,000	35,319	NO
Average percent of expected service time completed by AmeriCorps*State and National members. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	85%	89.2%	YES
Percent of members who complete a term of service and become eligible to receive an education award. ² Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	75%	75.4%	YES
Number of Promise Fellowships awarded. Source: <i>AmeriCorps*State and National. Corporation for National Service</i> .	500	486	YES³
Number of State Commissions reviewed for compliance with the national state administrative standards. Source: <i>AmeriCorps*State and National. Corporation for National Service</i> .	12	9	NO

Overall, the Corporation supported 796 AmeriCorps*State and National grantees in program year 1999 (See Table 1-2), using fiscal 1999 appropriation. The total number of grantees includes 89 Education Award Programs and 60 AmeriCorps Promise Fellow Programs, both funded under the Innovation budget activity. The number of formula programs exceeded original expectations because programs became smaller and states were therefore able to fund more of them. Also, by adhering to the guidance to reduce costs, states could afford additional programs.

In program year 1999, which corresponds generally with fiscal 2000, AmeriCorps* State and National programs⁴ enrolled 35,319 members (see Table 1-1) against a goal of 43,000. This

¹ The enrollment goal and result are for program year 1999, which generally corresponds to fiscal 2000. Enrollments for program year 1999 are supported with funds from the fiscal 1999 appropriation and begin in the fall of 1999 and end during the summer of 2000. AmeriCorps*State and National enrollment includes all AmeriCorps members, except NCCC and VISTA.

² This year's calculation differs from that used in the fiscal 1999 report. The decision was made this year to exclude individuals enrolled in the Trust from the calculation if they terminated with no service hours completed. During fiscal 2000, a concerted effort was made to close out the records of programs no longer in operation. Many members, who had been carried on the rolls for several years, long after their programs went out of business, were given a termination date in fiscal 2000. This was a useful accounting decision, but it did not take into account its effect on completion rates, which was to artificially deflate the completion rates by increasing the number of terminations with no education award.

³ This level of performance is considered to represent substantial compliance with the goal.

⁴ AmeriCorps*State and National enrollment includes all AmeriCorps members except those in AmeriCorps*NCCC and AmeriCorps*VISTA.

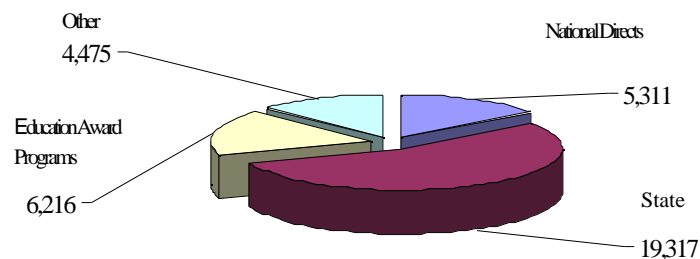
shortfall may be attributed to two factors, one internal and one external. First, the Corporation had anticipated greater enrollments under Education Award Program grants than was the result. The startup phase of new Education Award Programs has taken longer than originally expected. Second, continuing low unemployment rates and a very competitive job market for young adults created highly attractive alternatives to service.

More than half of the members, 19,317, participated in AmeriCorps through programs overseen by state commissions. National Direct grantees had 5,311 members. Education Award Program grantees enrolled 6,216. The remaining 4,475 AmeriCorps members (shown as “Other” in Figure 1-1) participated in several smaller programs, including Promise Fellows, service-learning corps, Tribes, and Territories. More than 6,000 additional AmeriCorps members enrolled through AmeriCorps*VISTA and AmeriCorps*NCCC.

Table 1-2. AmeriCorps*State and National Grant Awards Planned vs. Actual, Program Year 1999		
Grant Category	Planned	Actual
State Competitive	248	217
State Formula	254	374
National Direct	41	39
Education Award Program	95	89
Promise Fellows	60	60
Tribes	10	14
Territories	4	3
Total	712	796

Sources: (1) Fiscal Year 2000 Budget Estimate. Activities Authorized by the National and Community Service Act, Submission to Congress, February 10, 1999. (2) AmeriCorps*State and National Program Office. Corporation for National Service.

**Figure 1-1. Levels of Enrollment
Americorps*State and National Programs
Program Year 1999-2000**



Source: National Service Trust Database. Corporation for National Service.

Program Initiatives in 2000

AmeriCorps*State and National initiated new activities and expanded others in several areas during fiscal 2000. These initiatives included:

- Education Award Program.
- AmeriCorps Promise Fellows.
- Governor's Service Initiatives.
- America Reads

Education Award Program

To expand AmeriCorps and reduce costs, the Corporation developed the Education Award Program for individuals to receive only the AmeriCorps education award from the Corporation. Funds to defray almost all other costs associated with the AmeriCorps member come from a non-profit organization or from the private sector. Since the inception of the program, there have been over 150 Education Award Program grantees with over 30,000 members at an average cost to the Corporation (excluding the education award) of \$413 per full-time equivalent member. The Catholic Network of Volunteer Service, first funded in this category in 1998, is a good example of a multi-state effort where programs work with local community social service agencies to provide services to homeless shelters, tutoring, and mentoring.

More than 150 AmeriCorps members served as literacy tutors in 13 elementary schools throughout Oakland to enhance students' basic reading and writing skills. The members provided 30 minutes of one-on-one tutoring, four times a week, to more than 1,300 first- and second-grade students in the Oakland Unified School. Teachers reported that 78 percent of the students served improved their overall attitude towards school, 92 percent improved their overall academic skills, and 87 percent improved their reading and writing skills.

AmeriCorps Promise Fellows

As a follow-up to the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in April 1997, the Corporation began a special initiative designed to identify talented individuals to assist with state and local efforts to provide all young people the five fundamental resources identified at the Summit: (1) caring adults in their lives as parents, mentors, tutors, and coaches; (2) safe places with structured activities in which to learn and grow; (3) a healthy start and a healthy future; (4) an effective education that equips them with marketable skills; and (5) an opportunity to give back to communities through their own service.

For program year 1999, using fiscal 2000 funds, the Corporation awarded 60 grants supporting 486 Promise Fellows awards. The grantees actually enrolled 458 individuals in Promise Fellow positions. The Corporation did not award 500 Fellowships, the goal for program year 1999, because some grantees from the preceding year decided not to apply for continued funding. The Corporation only accepted continuation requests for fiscal 2000. There were insufficient funds in 2000 for new awards.

Since the program's inception, AmeriCorps Promise Fellows have provided leadership to hundreds of communities' efforts to expand, enhance, and improve the delivery of the five promises. For example, some AmeriCorps Promise Fellows engage young people in volunteering by developing a youth service program at a volunteer center or school. Other Fellows focus on training

volunteers to enlist low-income families in health insurance programs. Still other Fellows create job-shadowing programs for high school students.

For example, in Miami, an AmeriCorps Promise Fellow serving with HOPE provided crucial support for the KidCare Outreach program. This program works to educate potentially eligible families about the availability of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and Medicaid health coverage for their children. With the support of the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows, more than 4,000 uninsured children were contacted and more than 2,000 were actually enrolled in CHIP or Medicaid.

Governor's Service Initiatives

For fiscal 2000, the Corporation directed that additional funds be allocated to support new state-wide initiatives that relate to a governor's priority and that could benefit from a service component. To use these funds, a governor-appointed state commission had to develop a major state-wide initiative in one or more of the four issue areas of education, environment, public safety, and other human needs. Nineteen programs were funded, enrolling 615 members. One example is in Ohio, where the AmeriCorps program is part of the Governor's prominent policy initiative -- childhood literacy. The Governor earmarked state funds for the Ohio Reads effort, which, when coupled with the AmeriCorps program, recruits community volunteers to tutor children in grades K-4.

America Reads

In fiscal 1998, Congress appropriated additional funds for the Corporation to conduct activities designed to ensure that every school child can read well and independently by the third grade. The Corporation awarded grants to 30 organizations selected by the states. These activities continued and expanded in program year 1999-2000. The Abt Associates study, "AmeriCorps Tutoring and Student Reading Achievement," indicated that "tutored students at all grade levels improved their reading performance from pre-test to post-test more than the gain expected for the typical child at their grade level." It further found that "the majority of AmeriCorps tutoring programs implemented tutoring practices that the research has found to be effective in helping struggling students learn to read."

The State Administrative Standards Project

The Corporation continued and expanded its initiative to set administrative standards for state commissions on service. The State Administrative Standards Project helps the Corporation assess and expand the capacity of state commissions to administer federal funds in a responsible manner. The Corporation awards funds to state commissions for developing and supporting national service within the state. The state commissions must administer statewide grant processes, monitor programs, provide training and technical assistance, and serve as liaison between the Corporation and the local programs. The State Administrative Standards seek to communicate what the Corporation expects of state commissions. The standards were developed to serve as an effective and consistent tool for the Corporation to assess state commission administrative systems.

The State Administrative Standards consist of eleven standards that reflect the essential functions of a state commission. The Corporation developed these standards beginning in late 1998 with the input of a Standards Working Group made up of state commission staff and board members and Corporation staff. The Corporation staff ensured that all the statutory and agency policy

regulations were included in the Standards. Based on six years of experience with AmeriCorps and state commission operations, the standards reflect realistic and reasonable expectations.

The eleven standards are:

1. Conducts proper grant processes.
2. Properly monitors programs and ensures compliance.
3. Properly monitors member records.
4. Reports properly to the Corporation for National Service.
5. Utilizes appropriate financial and management systems.
6. Uses a planning and assessment process.
7. Manages personnel and volunteer resources.
8. Implements a system for training and technical assistance.
9. Generates broad-based support.
10. Promotes and initiates service within the state.
11. Communicates information within the state.

The standards review process has three stages. First, a state commission completes a self-assessment using the Standards tool. The self-assessment helps the commission gain a realistic view of its own administrative systems. Second, a six-person review team spends one week at the commission conducting the formal standards assessment. When the review is complete, there are two products. One product is a technical assistance plan created in collaboration with the state commission and supported with financial resources from the Corporation. The plan will help the state commission meet any standards it has not yet met. The second product is an assessment by Corporation staff that, along with other considerations, determines eligibility for competitive and special initiative money and similar discretionary resources.

Nine states were reviewed in fiscal 2000. The performance goal for 2000, however, was twelve. This shortfall is the result of the Corporation choosing to implement the process more slowly in the first full year of operation for this review process. The current schedule calls for 14 reviews in fiscal 2001.

While most of the nine states reviewed met most of the standards, to date only two states have passed all eleven standards. The seven states that have not yet passed the standards are actively working with the help of Corporation staff, technical assistance providers, and peers from other states to do so.

Over the next two years, the remaining states will participate in a State Administrative Standards assessment. The Corporation is committed to helping all state commissions reach the level of operation described in the State Administrative Standards. The Standards will help the Corporation devolve more of the implementation of national service to the state level as the administrative capacity of state commissions increases.

Getting Things Done

Over the past five years, AmeriCorps*State and National programs have proven effective at meeting critical needs and strengthening communities. Table 1-3 summarizes a few of the numerous accomplishments for 1998-1999, the most recent program year for which data are available. In addition, program evaluation studies support several conclusions about the ability of AmeriCorps programs to accomplish important ends.

- National service is having a positive impact on the life skills of program members, their educational attainment, and the levels of their civic involvement. Significantly, AmeriCorps members are gaining in skills identified by the Department of Labor as critically important for workplace effectiveness and civic participation in the 21st century. Perhaps most important, members of Corporation-supported programs overwhelmingly report that service has become a part of their lifestyle and that they expect to continue to serve in the future (Aguirre International. 1999c.)

Table 1-3. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports A Sample of Accomplishments from July 1, 1998 to June 30, 1999		
Emphasis Area	Selected Service Accomplishments	Number of Beneficiaries
Education	Students Taught (all grades, K-12)	478,900
	Peer tutors recruited or trained	32,900
Health and Human needs	Homeless people placed in permanent housing or transitional-to-permanent housing	14,900
	Individuals receiving health screenings, immunizations, diagnosis, and follow-up care	355,600
	People receiving health related information	1,210,600
Environment and Neighborhood Restoration	Community buildings rehabilitated, renovated, or repaired	2,600
	Trees planted in cities, towns, rural areas, and parks	513,600
Public Safety	Students trained in school conflict mediation programs	94,290
	Students taking part in violence avoidance activities after school	72,200

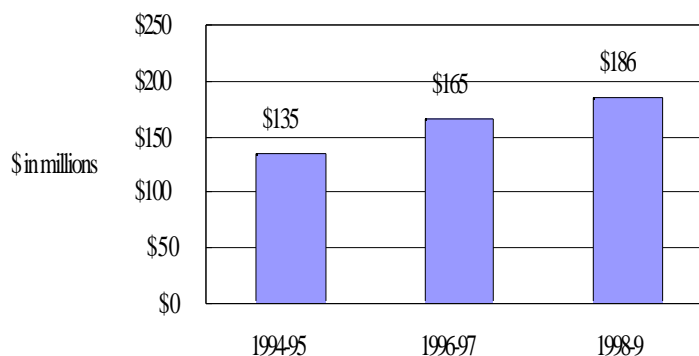
Source: *Annual Accomplishment Review*, 1998-1999. These accomplishments are based on annual reports provided by AmeriCorps grantees and sub-grantees to Aguirre International. The data are not subject to audit and should be considered as approximate indicators of level of performance. Independent reviews conducted of the accomplishment reporting process in earlier years found that the reported results were accurate reflections of effort. In fact, programs were frequently found to underreport accomplishments.

- *National service is making significant changes at the local level in the effectiveness of institutions and organizations in doing their jobs.* Evaluations show, for example, that AmeriCorps programs have expanded by 17 percent the number and type of local institutions involved in launching new services. They have expanded or improved existing services by 43 percent and helped 40 percent of existing organizations add new services. AmeriCorps has also expanded the ability of 83 percent of its affiliated institutions to do more with existing resources. As a group, evaluations showed that institutions sponsoring AmeriCorps programs experienced “significant change” because of AmeriCorps involvement. (Aguirre International. 1999c.)
- *Local organizations working in partnership with AmeriCorps raised their operating standards as a direct result of their AmeriCorps connection.* AmeriCorps programs

received an 88 percent “positive effect” rating among local program administrators. AmeriCorps was found to strengthen communities overall on 15 strength indicators. For example, AmeriCorps rated high on working with other groups and reaching objectives. The research shows that AmeriCorps strengthens links between local institutions, helps build communities’ physical and organizational infrastructures, and raises the overall level of community empowerment. (Aguirre International. 1999c.)

- *AmeriCorps’ literacy activities have significant impacts on reading scores and abilities.* Several studies document the impact of AmeriCorps on literacy. See a summary of these studies in Budget Activity 3: Innovation, Demonstration, and Assistance Activities.
- *Private and other local support under AmeriCorps*State and National programs has increased by more than \$50 million in the last five years* (see Figure 1-2). The General Accounting Office documented grantee reporting of an increase in state and local funding from \$135 million in 1994-95 to \$186 million in 1998-99.⁵ This is strong evidence of the growing support for AmeriCorps. Other evidence for the growth of private support for AmeriCorps is shown by the interest in the AmeriCorps Education Award Program, where the Corporation provides only the education award and up to \$500 per member, and the sponsor provides all other funding. In the first full year of operation, program year 1997-1998, the Education Award Program grantees enrolled 10,665 members.

Figure 1-2. Increase in Private and Local Support for AmeriCorps



Source: United States General Accounting Office. Report to Congressional Requestors. National service Programs. Two AmeriCorps Programs. Findings and Benefits. GAO/HEHS-00-33.

⁵ United States General Accounting Office. Report to Congressional Requestors. National Service Programs. Two AmeriCorps Programs. Findings and Benefits. GAO/HEHS-00-33, p. 10. Amounts are calculated by multiplying the number of full-time equivalent participants times the grantee matching funds per participants, as reported in Table 2 of the GAO report.

Table 1-4. Performance Measures: End Outcomes
Established By Independent Program Evaluation Studies
 A Sample of Outcomes from AmeriCorps*State and National

Outcomes	Findings	Source
	Outcomes For AmeriCorps Members	
Education Awards	Three of every four members successfully completed their terms of service, becoming eligible to receive the education award.	National Trust Data Base
Life Skills	Seventy-five percent of members gained significantly in "life skills," those competencies needed to function effectively in the modern workplace and social environment.	Aguirre International 1999c
Civic Engagement	Members' appreciation for the importance of civic engagement was strongly affected by national service. Members left service with an increased appreciation for others and with a better understanding of community issues. Virtually all (99%) planned to volunteer in the future and many indicated considering service-oriented careers following their AmeriCorps experience.	Jastrzab and others 1997
	Outcomes for Individuals Receiving Services	
Education	<p>Students participating in AmeriCorps tutoring programs improved their reading performance from pretest to post-test more than the gain expected for the typical child at their grade level.</p> <p>AmeriCorps tutoring programs report positive and significant change for the students who receive tutoring.</p> <p>Ninety percent of the 260,000 individuals receiving literacy services are children, with the majority in grades 1 through 6.</p>	<p>Abt Associates 2001</p> <p>ORC Macro 2000a; Aguirre International 1999a</p> <p>Abt Associates 1999</p> <p>Ripple 1997</p>
School Readiness	"The results of the analyses on the first two cohorts of children over their first year in the Jumpstart program [a grantee of AmeriCorps] suggest that the program has positive effects on at-risk children's school readiness, and suggest that, as the program is developed further and more children participate in the evaluation, there is real potential for showing stronger and positive program effects."	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention 1999
Mentoring	AmeriCorps members support mentoring programs, which are effective in reducing youth crime and helping young people succeed in school. The most recent Department of Justice report on mentoring concludes that mentoring programs reduce youth crime and help young people succeed in school. The report states that in one study participants with mentors were 46 percent less likely to start using drugs, 27 percent less likely to start using alcohol, and almost 33% less likely to hit someone.	
	(table continued on next page)	

Table 1-4 (continued)		
Outcomes	Findings	Source
	The study reports that the young people paired with mentors were 50 percent more likely to attend class, felt more competent about doing school work, skipped fewer classes, showed measurable increases in grade-point averages, and demonstrated noticeably improved relations with their peers and families.	
	Outcomes for Communities	
Meeting Community Needs	Seventy-three percent of community representatives surveyed in an in-depth, sample study of twelve programs reported that there were no other organizations to meet their communities' needs in the absence of AmeriCorps.	Research Triangle Institute 1999
Unique Services	Sixty-five percent of surveyed community representatives reported that no other organizations provided the services that AmeriCorps does.	Research Triangle Institute 1999
Bringing People Together	"...in community after community it [AmeriCorps] became a catalyst for people to work together to find new ways to solve problems."	Shumer and others 1995
Generating Volunteers	A national evaluation found an average of eight community volunteers generated by each AmeriCorps member under the AmeriCorps*State and National program. Subsequent reports by projects documented an average of 12 community volunteers per project.	Aguirre International 1997
	Return on Investment	
Cost-Benefit Ratio	An independent cost-benefit study found that programs supported by AmeriCorps returned between \$1.60 and \$2.60 for every dollar spent. The General Accounting Office validated the methodology and approach used in this independent study.	Neumann and others 1995
	Another independent study found that AmeriCorps produced, on average, a return of \$1.66 for every dollar invested.	Aguirre International 1999c

Source: Based on data contained in General Accounting Office Report United States General Accounting Office. Report to Congressional Requestors. National Service Programs. Two AmeriCorps Programs. Findings and Benefits. GAO/HEHS-00-33, p. 10.

Customer Satisfaction

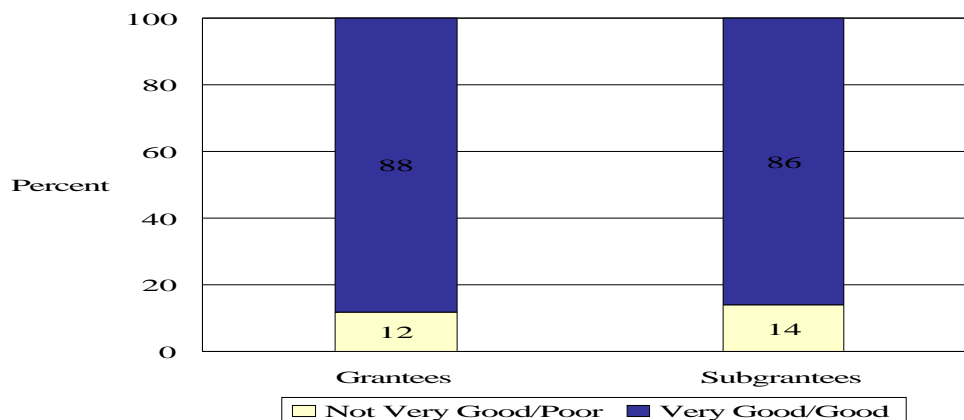
In 1999 (the most recent year for which data are available), the Corporation conducted a customer satisfaction survey of AmeriCorps*State and National grantees, using the services of an independent research firm (ORC Macro 2000b). Eighty-four percent of the sample responded to questions focusing on three essential areas of interest: (1) importance and performance of various Corporation functions; (2) quality of service received from the Corporation; and (3) factors having the greatest influence on overall satisfaction. For all essential performance areas, a majority

of respondents gave positive satisfaction ratings (see Figure 1-3). Eighty-eight percent of respondents representing the AmeriCorps*State and National grantees rated the overall quality of service received in the past year from the Corporation as either “good” or “very good.”

An analysis of the results revealed several factors that affect overall satisfaction with the Corporation’s AmeriCorps*State and National program. Four of the more important ones were:

- Issuing grants in a timely manner.
- Providing timely responses to inquiries and calls.
- Providing consistent information.
- Sensitivity to local needs and conditions.

Figure 1-3. Performance Measures: Customer Satisfaction
How Grantees and Subgrantees Rated Their Satisfaction with Corporation Services in 1999



Source: *Evaluation of the 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, AmeriCorps*State and National Program*. ORC Macro 2000b.

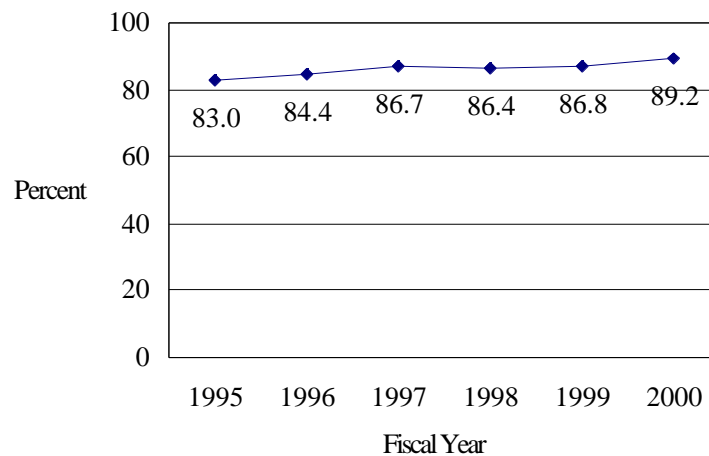
Expanding Opportunity

AmeriCorps*State and National has grown steadily since 1994 and now makes grant awards to support more than 40,000 service positions per year in community-based organizations. About two-thirds of them are full-time positions. The majority of these AmeriCorps members are in their twenties and generally mirror the demographic profile of the communities in which they serve. This means that half are Caucasian and half are other racial or ethnic minorities. Their economic and educational backgrounds echo the socioeconomic profile of Americans generally.

Completing Service and Earning the Education Award

As the primary indicator for how long members serve, the Corporation uses the average percent of time served compared to the time expected to serve (see Table 1-1). For example, at enrollment a full-time AmeriCorps member takes on the obligation to serve 1700 hours within the next twelve months. If the member serves the full 1700 hours, the completion rate is 100 percent. If the member were to serve only 1000 hours, the rate would be 58.8 percent. Overall, in fiscal 2000, AmeriCorps*State and National members served 89.2 percent of the service term for which they enrolled, an increase over the 86.8 percent in fiscal 1999 (see Figure 1-4), and the trend over six years is up.

Figure 1-4. Retention Rates in AmeriCorps*State and National Programs, 1995-2000



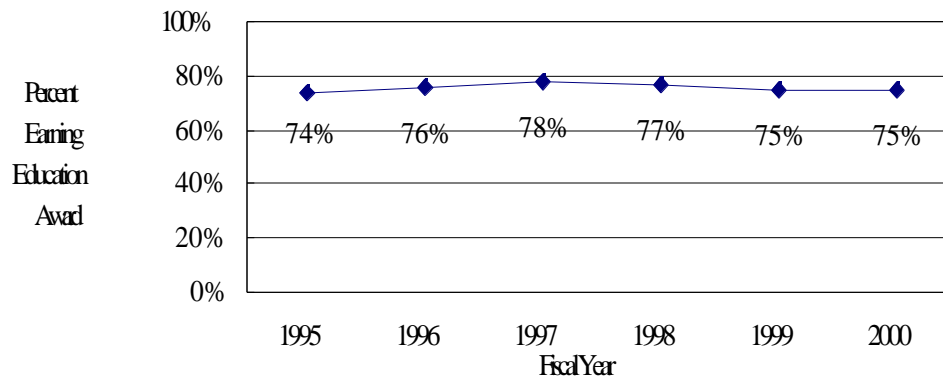
Source: National Service Trust Database. Corporation for National Service.

Another measure used to show expanding opportunity through AmeriCorps participation is the rate at which members successfully earn the education award. Three out of four members ending their term of service in fiscal 1999, 75.4 percent, qualified for an education award; thus the Corporation's 75 percent goal was met.⁶ In the six years of full program operation, 1995-2000, the completion rates for AmeriCorps*State and National have ranged between 74 percent and 78 percent (see Figure 1-5).

⁶ As mentioned earlier, this year's calculation differs from that used in the fiscal 1999 report. The decision was made this year to exclude individuals enrolled in the Trust from the calculation if they terminated with no service hours completed. This rule was applied to all years shown in the table.

Table 1-5. Completion Rates For AmeriCorps Grants Programs In Fiscal 2000					
Grant Category	Number of Members				Completion Rate
	Under Review	Earning Ed Award	Not Earning Ed Award	Ending Service	
National Direct	13	4,059	1,035	5,107	79.5%
State	35	12,876	5,543	18,454	69.8%
Education Award Program	11	6,804	933	7,748	87.8%
Other grants	12	2,860	1,097	3,969	72.0%
Total	71	26,599	8,608	35,278	75.4%

Figure 1-5. Percent of AmeriCorps*State And National Members Ending Service Earning an Education Award, Program Years 1995-2000



Source: National Service Trust Database. Corporation for National Service.

Increasing Responsibility

Service in AmeriCorps has a positive effect on participating members that will assist them in becoming productive citizens with an increased sense of civic responsibility.

Effects on Members

AmeriCorps' emphasis on member development, in addition to providing service, appears to have served the members very well. Aguirre International analyzed changes in members' reported life skills, those "...competencies needed to function effectively in the modern workplace and social environment" over the course of a service year (Aguirre International. 1999c). They also compared members' life skills to the change in life skills reported by a comparison group of similar individuals not engaged in national service. Their study concluded that more than three-quarters of AmeriCorps members had life skill gains, many of them "dramatic" gains, while the comparison group members did not. Moreover, all ethnic groups realized these gains and the

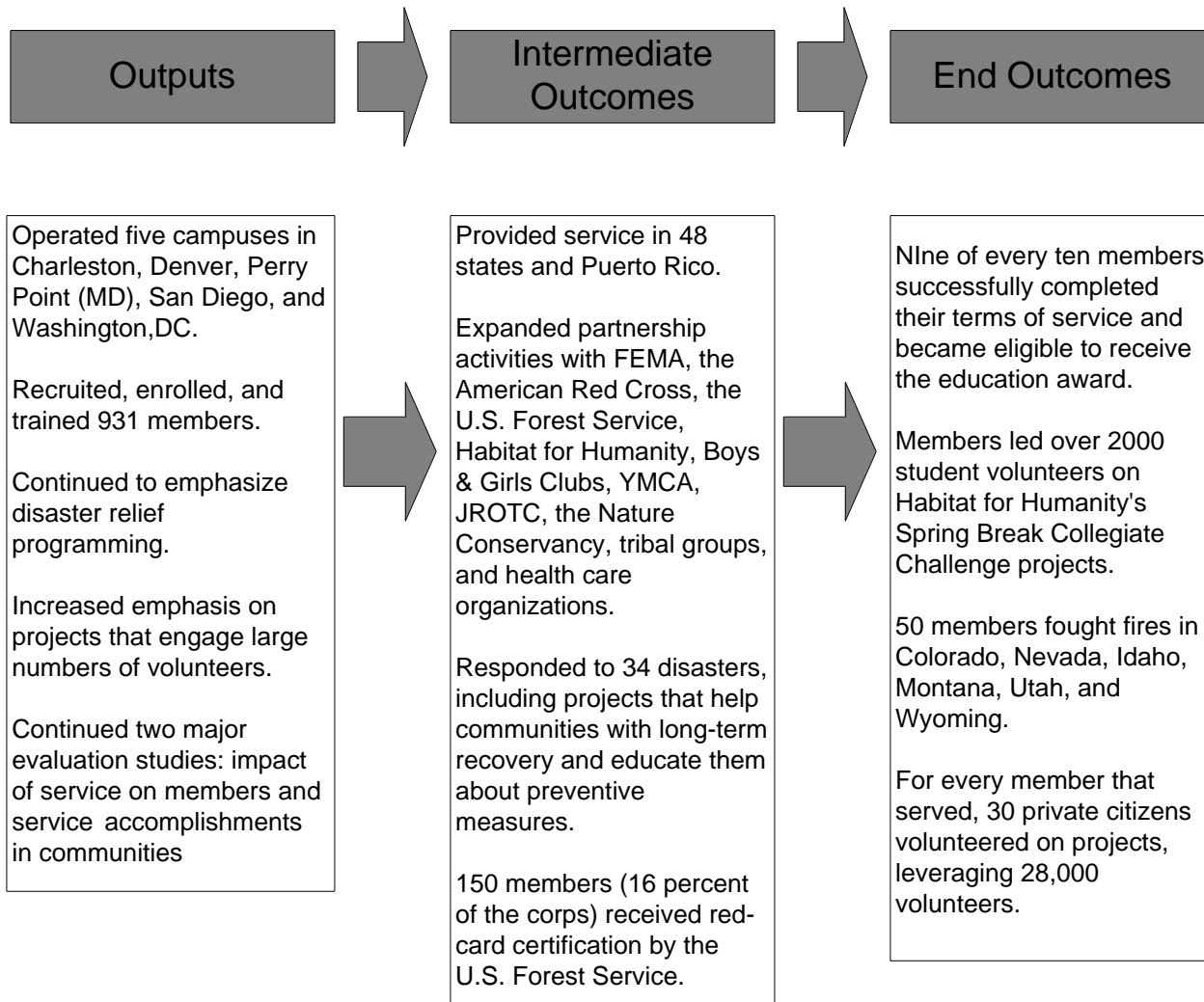
improvements were particularly marked for members who entered the program with limited skills. Those in human services programs appeared to gain the most.

Data from members also suggested that their appreciation for the importance of civic engagement was strongly affected by national service. Members left service with an increased appreciation for others and with a better understanding of community issues. All (99 percent) planned to volunteer in the future and many indicated that they would consider service-oriented careers following their AmeriCorps experience (Aguirre International. 1999c). These outcomes are corroborated by data from AmeriCorps members collected as they exit from service; nearly all report their intention to continue volunteering and the majority say that their AmeriCorps experience was influential in that commitment.

References

- Abt Associates. 1999. *Descriptive Study of AmeriCorps Literacy Programs: State and National*. Cambridge, MA.
- Abt Associates. 2001. *AmeriCorps Tutoring and Student Reading Achievement*. Final Report. Cambridge, MA.
- Aguirre International. 1997. *AmeriCorps State/National Impact Evaluation: First Year Report, June 1997*. San Mateo, CA.
- Aguirre International. 1999a. *An Analysis of 1996/1997 AmeriCorps Tutoring Outcomes*. San Mateo, CA.
- Aguirre International. 1999b. *Annual Accomplishment Review, 1997-1998*. San Mateo, CA.
- Aguirre International. 1999c. *Making a Difference: Impact of AmeriCorps*State/National Direct on Members and Communities 1994-1995 and 1995-1996*. San Mateo, CA.
- Aguirre International. 2000. *Annual Accomplishment Review, 1998-1999*. San Mateo, CA.
- Jastrzab, JoAnn et al. 1997. *Youth Corps: Promising Strategies for Young People and Their Communities*. Abt Associates: Cambridge, MA.
- Neumann, George , R. C. Kormendi, and others. 1995. *The Benefits and Costs of National Service: Methods for Benefit Assessment with Application to Three AmeriCorps Programs*.
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. 1999. *Juvenile Mentoring Program – 1998 Report to Congress*. Office of Justice Programs. Department of Justice.
- ORC Macro. 1999. *The 1998 Customer Satisfaction Survey, AmeriCorps*State and National Program*. Calverton, MD.
- ORC Macro. 2000a. *DC Reads Year 2 Evaluation*. Calverton, MD.
- ORC Macro. 2000b. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, AmeriCorps*State and National Program*. Calverton, MD.
- Research Triangle Institute. 1999. *Assessment of the Value-Added Effect of National Service Programs on the Communities They Serve: Field Report*. Research Triangle Park, NC.
- Ripple, C. 1997. *Evaluation of the Jumpstart Program in New Haven, CT*. Yale University Bush Center in Child Development and Social Policy.
- Shumer, R., J. Maland Cody, and others. 1995. *The Benefits and Costs of National Service*. ORC Macro. Calverton, MD.
- Stillman, Joseph. 1999. *Working to Learn: Skills Development Under Work First*. Public/Private Ventures. Philadelphia, PA.

AMERICORPS*NCCC 2000 PERFORMANCE RESULTS

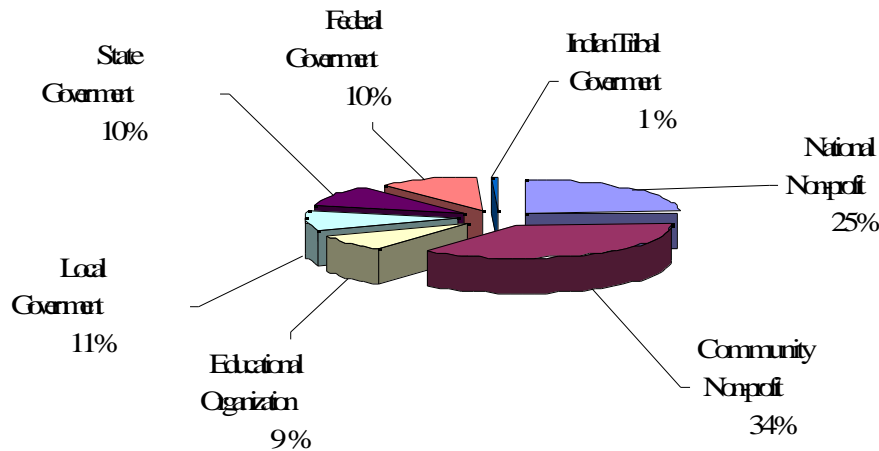


CHAPTER 2. AMERICORPS*NATIONAL CIVILIAN COMMUNITY CORPS

Modeled after the Civilian Conservation Corps and the United States military, the National Civilian Community Corps, a full-time residential service program, was proposed by Senators Boren, McCain, Warner, Dole, Wofford, Nunn, Kennedy, Mikulski, Simon, Dixon, Domenici, Reid, and Seymour in 1991 and enacted into law in 1993. Since AmeriCorps*NCCC was launched in 1994, more than 22,000 young Americans have applied for 7,000 member positions. Members serve for ten months on a wide range of team-based service projects in collaboration with local sponsors in almost every state and territory. AmeriCorps*NCCC members are diverse; teams are made up of young people from a variety of backgrounds. The average age of members is about 21 years. Members without their high school diplomas serve alongside college graduates.

The NCCC has five campuses located on closed military bases in San Diego, California; Charleston, South Carolina; and Denver, Colorado; a veterans medical facility in Perry Point, Maryland; and a municipal facility in Washington, DC. Projects focus on environmental activities, education, human needs, and disaster response; 50 percent of all projects are conducted in low-income communities. Project sponsors include non-profit community-based and national organizations, park services, faith-based and educational institutions, and state and local governments. Service-learning is an integral part of NCCC project activities, as well as the residential experience and approach to member development.

Figure 2-1. Types of Project Sponsors
Program Year 1999-2000



Source: AmeriCorps*NCCC Service Project Database System. Corporation for National Service.

Outcomes

In fiscal 2000, 931 members completed 449 projects in 48 states and Puerto Rico (see Table 2-1) and assisted citizens on 34 disaster relief projects. Member enrollment exceeded the goal by eight percent. For the first time since the program was established, the NCCC had a year-round presence. This was accomplished by instituting staggered start dates. Approximately one-half of the Corps started the program year in October 1999 and the other half started the program year in January 2000. Eighty-four percent of the members successfully completed a full term of service. The average expected service time completed by this group of NCCC members was 105 percent. That this exceeds 100 percent is the result of two factors: the high completion rate and the practice on the part of many members of serving more hours than the minimum required to earn the education award.

*“These kids [AmeriCorps*NCCC members] proceeded to do real work, day in and day out, and provide real help! They worked on clean-up, spot fire management, and helped our community with immediate problems. They were organized, self-sufficient, caring, hard working, and in the poetic sense, true angels of mercy.”* From a letter to the President from someone whose home was destroyed by a forest fire.

Table 2-1. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for AmeriCorps*NCCC, 2000

Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of members enrolled. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	860	933	YES
Average percent of expected service time completed by AmeriCorps*NCCC. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	103%	105%	YES
Percent of members who complete a term of service and become eligible to receive the education award. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	80%	83.8%	YES
Number of states in which projects are completed. Source: <i>NCCC Project Completion Report</i> .	50	48 and Puerto Rico	YES

The NCCC achieved impressive results in fiscal 2000 with no increase in funding. Members worked long hours doing hard and important work, and the results are visible in communities across the country (See Table 2-2). Members enrolled hundreds of children in state medical insurance programs. They assisted veterans and senior citizens and worked with at-risk youth. Members constructed playgrounds and tutored and mentored thousands of children. The 148 environmental projects those members conducted resulted in new hiking trails and over 135,000 new trees, shrubs, and seedlings in our national parks.

The NCCC completed 449 projects in 48 of the 50 states, which represents substantial compliance with the goal of having a project in every state. The two states in which the NCCC did not carry out projects were Delaware and Vermont, states that the Northeast Region campus serves. Teams from this campus were instead deployed for several months on disaster relief projects fighting fires in the western states. Members served as initial attack teams, cut fire lines, and ex-

tinguished lingering hotspots. This was the largest ever deployment of NCCC members for a fire fighting effort. Members also provided flood relief support in North Carolina in the early part of the fiscal year.

Disaster Relief

The Federal Emergency Management Administration, the American Red Cross, and the U.S. Forest Service are the primary sponsors of NCCC disaster relief efforts. As a part of the American Red Cross National Disaster Response Network, NCCC members are trained and certified in CPR, first aid, mass care, damage assessment, and family assistance. Fire fighting is also an important aspect of NCCC disaster activities. In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, 150 members (16 percent of the entire Corps) were red-card certified in a rigorous and challenging fire fighter training program.

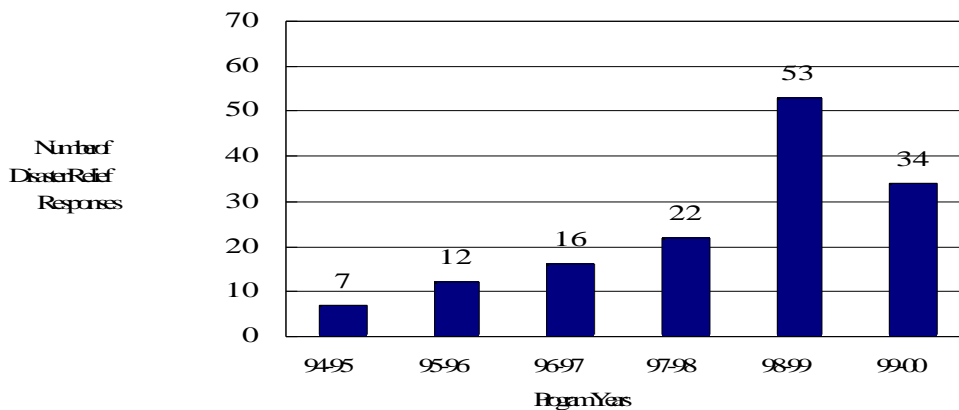
Table 2-2. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports⁷ A Sample Of Accomplishments From 2000	
Emphasis Area	Selected Service Accomplishments
All Areas	1.5 million hours of service in 48 states and Puerto Rico and 28,000 volunteers leveraged
Education	42,000 students tutored or mentored 250 summer and environmental education programs organized or facilitated
Health and Human Needs	55,000 veterans and senior citizens assisted 10,000 at-risk youth assisted 90 gang-alternative programs developed or conducted
Environment and Neighborhood Restoration	135,000 trees or shrubs planted 500 miles of trail constructed or restored 50 Boys & Girls Clubs renovated 750 homes constructed or renovated
Disaster Relief	33,500 people assisted in disaster areas 40,500 meals served to disaster victims 799,000 pounds of clothing and food distributed to disaster victims

Source: AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps Project Database. Corporation for National Service.

⁷ The data derive from the Corporation's accomplishment reporting system, are not subject to audit, and should be considered approximate indicators of level of performance. Results are rounded off and more precise estimates are available from the program office. Independent reviews conducted of the accomplishment reporting process in earlier years found that the reported results were accurate reflections of effort. In fact, programs were frequently found to underreport accomplishments.

Year-round programming was critical to the program's ability to respond to the wildfires in the Western states in August and September 2000. Before the use of staggered start dates, August and September were the periods between program cycles when members were not available. In fiscal 2000, over fifty members from three campuses were available for deployment to Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming to help the U.S. Forest Service combat forest fires. Disaster relief efforts also included flood relief in Ohio, North Carolina, Phoenix, and Florida. Long-term recovery support continued to expand as well as disaster mitigation and education activities performed in partnership with the American Red Cross.

Figure 2-2. AmeriCorps*NCCC Disaster Relief Responses
Program Years 1994-1999



Source: AmeriCorps*NCCC Service Project Database System. Corporation for National Service.

Serving with Community Volunteers

NCCC members are highly trained and organized, and are particularly effective at mobilizing and supervising other volunteers. Project sponsors rely heavily on full-time members to supervise and thereby enhance the effectiveness of their part-time volunteers. For every NCCC member in service in fiscal 2000, thirty local volunteers served on NCCC projects. This represents an increase of 200 percent over fiscal 1999 levels. The activities that NCCC members perform to engage more volunteers on service projects range from simple outreach to coordinating volunteer activities at project sites. Members led 2,000 student volunteers who spent their spring break on Habitat for Humanity Collegiate Challenge projects building houses for low-income families. NCCC continued to expand the involvement of local volunteers in the service that NCCC members perform. NCCC also sought to serve as a resource to project sponsors who want to engage large numbers of volunteers on special events, but lack the resources to plan for and manage a project of this size.

“Even though some projects in the long list of community needs had to be abandoned due to the onset of cold weather, the efforts of the AmeriCorps team far exceeded my expectations. Their effort and energy have encouraged local volunteers to complete some of the unfinished work and other town improvements.” Project Coordinator, City of Bridgeport

Coordination of Large-scale Events and Large Groups of Volunteers. AmeriCorps*NCCC members make a big difference for organizations conducting major volunteer efforts and events. Teams helped conduct the winter pre-games for the 2001 Winter Special Olympic Games. This project built on a partnership with the 2000 World Special Olympic Summer Games where 250 members helped conduct the games in North Carolina. Members will also help conduct the 2001 Winter Special Olympic Games in Anchorage, Alaska. The NCCC team-based structure and member organizing and coordinating skills are ideal for organizations that engage large groups of people in volunteer and other events.

Another example of AmeriCorps*NCCC members effectively coordinating large numbers of volunteers is the Habitat for Humanity Collegiate Challenge. Members coordinated the efforts of over 2,000 students who volunteered with Habitat during their spring breaks. The Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service also provides an opportunity for NCCC members to engage and lead volunteers. In Washington, DC, members worked with the National Basketball Association TeamUP program and 475 public middle school students in five schools on school beautification, repair, and other projects.

Strengthening Communities and Expanding Opportunities. Another goal of NCCC project activities is to encourage local involvement by recruiting and training local community members to work with and continue the activities started by NCCC members. In partnership with the Heritage Christian Home Springdale Farm in East Rochester, New York, NCCC members worked with children and adults to build increased awareness about agriculture and agroforestry. They demonstrated forest-farming practices for community members, constructed a greenhouse, conducted educational farm tours for thousands of school children, and repaired and upgraded the farm facilities and ecosystems. The NCCC service resulted in new job opportunities for the disabled men and women who work in day programs at the Springdale Farm.

NCCC's work with Native American communities has enabled many tribal groups to preserve, refurbish, and upgrade tribal facilities. Serving with tribes in Arizona, Montana, South Dakota, and Oklahoma, 70 members renovated homes, schools, senior housing, and community buildings. They made public facilities handicapped-accessible, supported summer program planning for children, and preserved historic landmarks. The NCCC residential, team-based structure is in harmony with many tribal beliefs of community and teamwork and the program would serve as a model for establishing residential service programs on four reservations in fiscal 2001.

"The AmeriCorps team was the hardest working bunch of young people I've ever met. We benefited tremendously from their willingness to help out and participate in our community."
Business Manager and Athletic Director, Frazer School District, Ft. Peck Reservation, Montana

Expanding National Partnerships

While continuing to serve with a multitude of local project sponsors, AmeriCorps*NCCC also extended its growing commitment to collaborate with national organizations. In an effort to meet the greatest need and to provide the greatest overall return for the residents of the communities being served, NCCC has developed broad-based alliances with national organizations that have affiliates in communities throughout the country. In addition to its national partnerships with FEMA, the American Red Cross, and the U.S. Forest Service, NCCC implemented national initiatives with Habitat for Humanity, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the YMCA, 4-H Centers, JROTC, and the Nature Conservancy.

The two largest national partnerships resulted in the greatest number of completed projects and focused on low-income housing and youth development issues. Alliances with Habitat for Humanity and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America have provided AmeriCorps*NCCC a unique opportunity to work collaboratively with other organizations to address compelling needs at the national and local level.

Habitat for Humanity. AmeriCorps*NCCC performed 35 projects with Habitat for Humanity sites across the country; this is an increase over the previous year. In addition to working at the nine Collegiate Challenge sites, NCCC members helped build 130 new homes and renovated 35 others. In support of Habitat's Native American initiative, members weatherized ten homes on the Cherokee River Reservation at Eagle Butte, South Dakota.

“What a fantastic group of young people! These AmeriCorps volunteers have not only saved our organization \$10,000 in labor and man-hours, they have inspired the kids, the staff, and me!” Executive Director, San Francisco Boys & Girls Club

Boys & Girls Clubs of America. In partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs across the country, members renovated 57 facilities, and helped increase community support for the clubs. As part of the national effort to close the digital divide, members installed computers in clubs. Digital divide projects were also conducted in partnership with other youth service organizations like the YMCA.

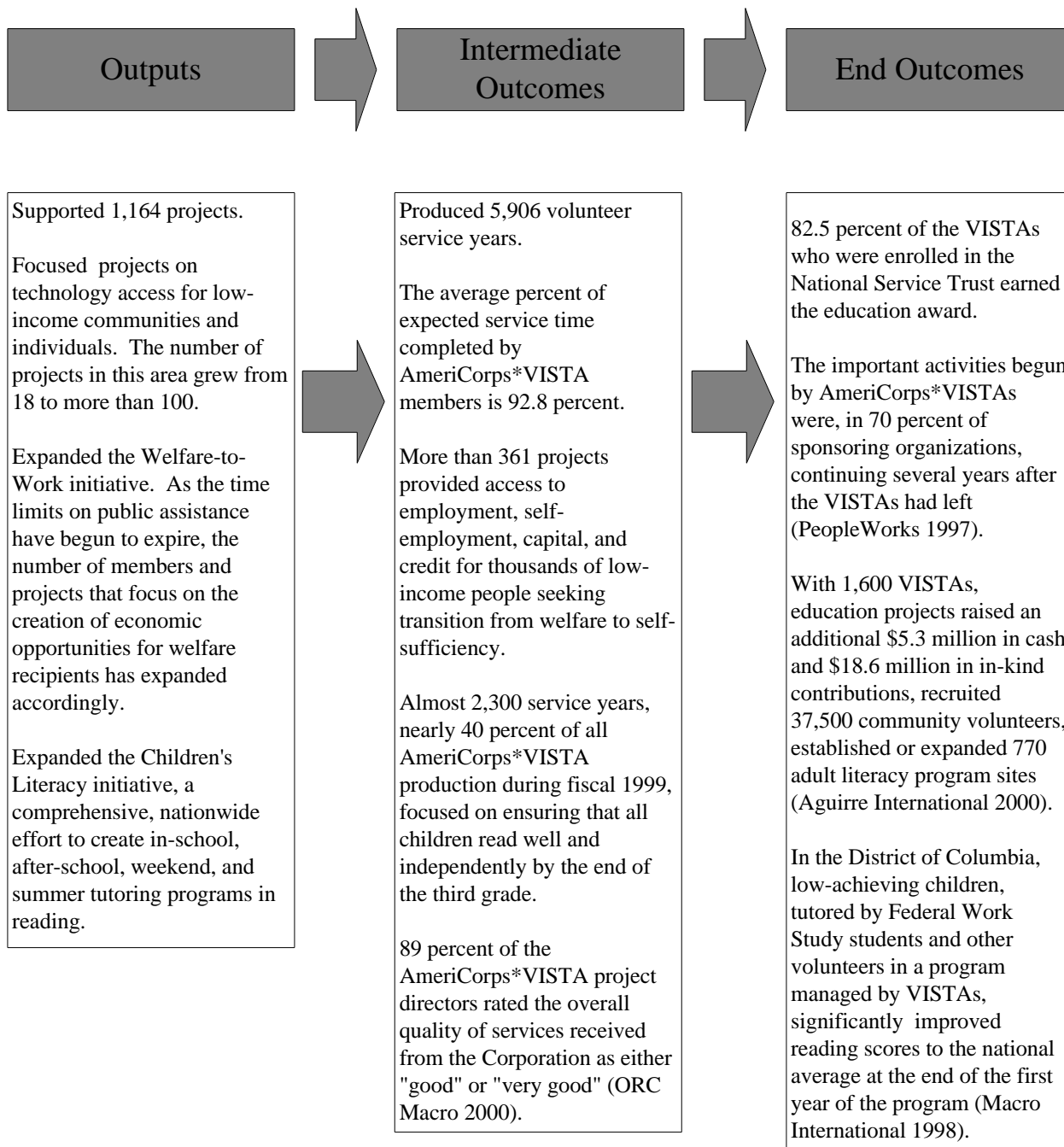
National partnerships enable AmeriCorps*NCCC to support the voluntary sector in solving many of the country's most pressing problems, including providing housing and safe places for children and youth, and expanding the health care safety net. NCCC works with the YMCA to upgrade facilities and with the Health Resources and Services Administration's Bureau of Primary Health Care to perform more projects with community-based health care programs. NCCC's collaboration with national partners reflects a trend towards national initiatives with local implementation.

This collaborative approach to working with national partners is a powerful service multiplier, with other non-profit organizations and government agencies learning first hand what the NCCC can do to meet the compelling needs in communities across the nation. In order to respond to the escalating call for service support, the NCCC will continue to maximize its service effectiveness.

Outcomes from Program Evaluation Studies

No formal evaluation studies on the results and outcomes of AmeriCorps*NCCC are yet available. Two major studies are underway, however. One study is the *Longitudinal Research on National Service Participation*, begun during 1999 and planned to continue for 3-5 years. This study focuses on improvements in the lives of members resulting from their service. Preliminary baseline data shows that members express a strong commitment to service; the opportunity to engage in service was the primary reason for enrolling for a majority of the members. The second study is the *AmeriCorps*NCCC Community Impact Evaluation*, also started in 1999. This impact study is investigating the degree of program impact on communities and the ability of communities to sustain projects after AmeriCorps*NCCC members depart. This study is entering the final stages of data collection. Results available from both of these studies will be available in the fall of 2001.

AMERICORPS*VISTA 2000 PERFORMANCE RESULTS



CHAPTER 3. AMERICORPS*VISTA

AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) is a full-time, national service program for men and women ages 18 and older interested in developing lasting solutions to the problems of poverty in America. AmeriCorps*VISTA members serve in nonprofit organizations and agencies to develop new permanent infrastructure that aids and expands services, strengthens programs, and empowers low-income individuals. More than half of AmeriCorps*VISTA Sponsoring Organizations are small local organizations with less than ten professional staff. Likewise, most Sponsors operate on cash funding of less than \$250,000 annually.

AmeriCorps*VISTAs are entrepreneurial in their thinking and driven in their desire to create positive, long-term, sustainable change. In order to sustain local projects, members focus on building community capacity, mobilizing private and public resources, recruiting community volunteers, and increasing self-reliance. According to Westat (2000), 37 percent of AmeriCorps*VISTA members are minority with Black/African American (22 percent) and Hispanic (12 percent) groups composing the largest minority representation. White members total 63 percent. Most members have college degrees or at least three years of work experience. To complement their existing skills, members receive training in community mobilization, project management, asset identification, capacity building, and program sustainability.

AmeriCorps*VISTA is part of the AmeriCorps national network of service programs housed in the Corporation for National Service. The program has been addressing the needs of underserved communities since 1965, when it was established as Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) during President Johnson's administration. During the past 35 years, more than 130,000 committed individuals have joined forces with 13,000 local organizations across the nation to strengthen poor communities and help people escape poverty. Building on this history, efforts to engage alumni in current initiatives began in earnest this past summer. Both the number and diversity of alumni nationwide are resources to help develop and implement innovative anti-poverty strategies.

AmeriCorps*VISTA program performance in fiscal 2000 can be understood by focusing on seven areas:

- Overall accomplishments.
- Program initiatives.
- Service accomplishments.

Family Pathfinders is a Texas community-based partnership of volunteer teams from faith-based organizations, civic groups, and businesses helping families along the path toward self-sufficiency. The program is helping families receiving welfare (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families/TANF) overcome barriers to getting and keeping a good job. AmeriCorps*VISTAs have supported more than 3,000 Family Pathfinders volunteers, trained as teams and have sponsored more than 600 families. Eighty-three percent of these welfare-to-work families are no longer receiving welfare, and more than 60 percent of the families have verified employment. VISTAs are currently assisting in developing three additional program sites will be added this year, increasing the total number of sites to 14 statewide.

- Sustainability and capacity building in low-income communities.
- Cost-share production.
- Member recruitment and development.
- Customer satisfaction.

In the annual performance plan for 2000, AmeriCorps*VISTA set targets for eight annual performance indicators. The program met or exceeded seven goals (see Table 3-1).

Table 3-1. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for AmeriCorps*Vista, Fiscal 2000			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of AmeriCorps*VISTA projects. Source: <i>VISTA Management System</i> .	1,200	1,164	YES⁸
Average percent of expected service time completed by AmeriCorps*VISTA. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	85%	92.8%	YES
Percent of those AmeriCorps*VISTAs who enroll in the Trust who complete a term of service and become eligible to receive the education award. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	88%	82.5%	NO⁹
Number of AmeriCorps*VISTA service years completed (excluding negotiated cost-share agreements). Source: <i>VISTA Management System</i> .	5,900	5,906	YES
Number of AmeriCorps*VISTA service years supported by cost-share agreements. Source: <i>VISTA Management System</i> and <i>VISTA Cost-Share Database</i> .	1,000	987	YES¹⁰
Number of AmeriCorps*VISTA projects focused on welfare-to-work challenges. Source: <i>VISTA Management System</i> .	250	361	YES
Number of AmeriCorps*VISTA projects focused on technology issues. Source: <i>VISTA Management System</i> .	15	100	YES
Number of AmeriCorps*VISTA service years completed in projects where the focus of activity is children's literacy. Source: <i>VISTA Management System</i> .	2,200	2,115	YES¹¹

⁸ Performance at this level is considered substantial compliance with the goal.

⁹ The goal for 2000 was set based on reported performance for 1999 found in earlier reports, but a recalculation of the performance data from the Trust shows that the completion rate for 1999 was 81.4 percent, not 88 percent.

¹⁰ Performance at this level is considered substantial compliance with the goal.

¹¹ Performance at this level is considered substantial compliance with the goal.

Overall Accomplishments

AmeriCorps*VISTA programs provided services to those most in need, with more than 80 percent of individuals served living below the federal poverty level. AmeriCorps*VISTA leveraged resources by forming partnerships with nearly 1,200 nonprofit organizations ranging from small rural public schools and faith-based groups to national organizations.

According to an evaluation of project accomplishments (Aguirre International 2000), in one year approximately 5,000 AmeriCorps*VISTA members:

- Reached more than four million beneficiaries including children, students, adults, families, senior citizens, welfare recipients, unemployed job seekers, those in need of housing or health care, substance abusers, and victims of abuse.
- Raised more than \$85 million in cash and in-kind resources—\$51 million in funds and \$34 million in in-kind contributions—to expand and develop the sponsor organizations and the project activities initiated. On average, each member generated \$15,400 in cash and in-kind resources.
- Recruited more than 283,000 community volunteers who donated 6.6 million volunteer hours to project activities. On average, each AmeriCorps*VISTA member recruited 52 community volunteers. The estimated value of the 6.6 million hours of service provided by these volunteers ranged from \$34 million (based on the federal minimum hourly wage of \$5.15) to \$98 million (based on the Independent Sector's valuation of an equivalent wage for volunteers at \$14.83 per hour).

The same evaluation concludes that the AmeriCorps*VISTA program is clearly “fulfilling its legislative mandate to alleviate poverty and poverty-related problems, generate private sector resources, encourage volunteer service, and strengthen the capacity of local agencies and organizations to deliver and expand services for those in need.”

Program Initiatives in Fiscal 2000

Bridging the Digital Divide

The gap in technology access for low-income communities and individuals is a significant national issue that is being addressed by AmeriCorps*VISTA members and projects. AmeriCorps*VISTA members are involved in all aspects of technology development activities including: assessing technology needs; designing technology plans; organizing computer learning centers; securing resources for hardware, software, and commu-

Teaming for TECHNOlogy San Francisco is collaborating with San Francisco State University's Office of Community Service Learning and the College of Extended Learning's Multimedia Studies Program. The program helps pre-screened nonprofit organizations develop websites with the help of students enrolled in SFSU's Web Design Intensive Program. The program also generates publicity for the project in the Bay Area and works to acquire training and software donations for the nonprofit agencies receiving websites. SFSU students provide commercial-quality websites and website maintenance training to nonprofit community-based organizations serving low-income populations in the San Francisco Bay Area – such as the Chinese Newcomers Service Center, Nihonmochi Little Friends, Samoan Community Development Center, and the South of Market Child-care Center.

nications links; and implementing training programs. In the past year, the number of AmeriCorps*VISTA projects focused on technology issues grew from 18 to more than 100. AmeriCorps*VISTA members provided more than \$1.8 million in technology hardware, software, and services to 800 nonprofit agencies.

One example of AmeriCorps*VISTA technology access programming is a unique partnership among the United Way of America, IBM, and AmeriCorps*VISTA. This project, Teaming for TECHNOLOGY, focuses on enhancing leadership and technology skills in grassroots organizations. Fifty AmeriCorps*VISTA members are placed at 17 sites throughout the country. Members assist local nonprofit organizations in effectively using technology to increase the impact of their work in low-income communities. The role of the member is to assist with the development of technology plans, secure resources, and implement training programs for agencies and the low-income clients of those agencies.

Another illustration of a technology partnership is PowerUP. PowerUP is a major national initiative launched by more than a dozen nonprofit organizations, major corporations, and federal agencies to help ensure that America's underserved young people acquire the skills, experiences, and resources they need to succeed in the digital age. The goal of PowerUP is to use innovative approaches to bridge the digital divide that separates the "haves" and "have-nots" in their access to computers, technology, and online resources.

PowerUP grew from an initial \$10 million grant from the Case Foundation. In addition to partnering with AmeriCorps*VISTA, PowerUP has engendered support from AOL and the AOL Foundation, the Waitt Family Foundation, PowerBar Inc., Sun Microsystems, and the Family Education Network. Many youth serving organizations are partners, including: the YMCA of the USA, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, National Urban League, Communities in Schools, and Save the Children.

Through AmeriCorps*VISTAs, PowerUP is able to develop and implement computer centers based in schools, community centers, and other locations across the country, including both urban locations and Indian reservations. Members not only provide young people with access to the wide range of content and information on the Internet, they also help foster positive youth development through the use of technology.

Welfare to Work Activities

During the past two years, AmeriCorps*VISTA has significantly expanded its efforts to move people from welfare to work. As the time limits on public assistance have begun to expire, the number of members and projects that focus on the creation of economic opportunities for welfare recipients has expanded accordingly. Currently, more than 300 projects are providing access to employment, self-employment, capital, and credit for thousands of low-income people seeking transition from welfare to self-sufficiency (see Table 3-1).

According to the accomplishment survey conducted by Aguirre International (2000), in 1999 (the last year for which data are available), AmeriCorps*VISTA projects:

- Referred more than 23,000 individuals to job opportunities.
- Placed more than 6,500 individuals in jobs with an estimated average hourly wage of \$6.98.

- Helped more than 1,400 businesses in opening almost 3,000 positions for unemployed individuals and assisted more than 600 businesses to open 1,400 positions for welfare recipients.

The number of community and economic development projects has increased from 181 in 1996 to 211 in 1999. AmeriCorps*VISTA members also fostered economic growth in low-income communities by:

- Helping more than 900 businesses obtain development capital.
- Enabling 260 commercial establishments to open in low-income neighborhoods.

AmeriCorps*VISTA members are serving in local community development credit unions to develop Individual Development Account (IDA) initiatives. Members help to raise matching funds for the accounts of low-income persons. The intent of IDAs is to provide equity and help create a culture of saving. Local IDA initiatives provide counseling on home ownership, financial management, and small business development. At the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation in Oakland, California, a single member has raised \$190,000 in matches for individual development accounts. The account owners can then use those funds to help finance a home purchase, an education, or a small business.

Another example of an AmeriCorps*VISTA Welfare-to-Work partnership is its collaboration with the Corporation for Enterprise Development. The purpose of CFED's AmeriCorps*VISTA Project is to develop a model national service project that builds the capacity, sustainability, and quality of the Individual Development Account (IDA) field. AmeriCorps*VISTAs in the project raised \$600,000 for IDA programs. CFED aims to encourage innovation and facilitate the sharing of best practice information related to IDA programs. In just eighteen months, the CFED AmeriCorps*VISTA Project has recruited, trained and placed 99 AmeriCorps*VISTA members in twenty-five states and the District of Columbia. Together these AmeriCorps*VISTA members established five youth IDA initiatives. They translated money management and financial literacy curricula into Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese, Korean, as well as several other languages. After an AmeriCorps*VISTA member's placement at ADVOCAP in Wisconsin, the number of IDA account holders grew from 40 to 105, an outcome directly attributable to the marketing, outreach, and recruitment efforts of the member.

Children's Literacy

In fiscal 2000, AmeriCorps*VISTA continued its Children's Literacy initiative. Approximately 40 percent of all AmeriCorps*VISTA activity during fiscal 2000 focused on ensuring that all children read well and independently by the end of the third grade. This initiative is a comprehensive, nationwide effort to create in-school, after-school, weekend, and summer tutoring programs in reading. As part of this effort, AmeriCorps*VISTA members play an active role in recruiting, training, and coordinating volunteer tutors from all walks of life including college students, senior citizens, and volunteers from the business, faith-based, government, and nonprofit sectors.

An example of a successful project in literacy is the Washington Reading Corps (WRC), in which AmeriCorps played an important part. It started in 1998, mobilizing thousands of volunteer tutors in a statewide effort to raise reading levels of children who have struggled with reading. WRC directs public, private, and community resources to those schools performing the poorest on state reading tests. More than 120 AmeriCorps*VISTA members helped set up programs and recruit community volunteers and other AmeriCorps members to tutor 22,000 students in grades K-6.

During the Washington Reading Corps' first year of operation, the program exceeded all expectations. As reported by WRC, 1999 statewide test results demonstrated that schools participating in the program posted an 11 percent increase in the number of students meeting or surpassing the fourth grade reading test standards. That compares to an average increase of 6 percent for all elementary schools in the state. The WRC schools have some of the highest percentages of children receiving free and reduced meals, an indicator of economic hardships faced in their households.

Summer Activities

During the summer of 2000, nearly 1,200 Summer Associates served in projects focused on early childhood and family literacy. Evaluation studies indicate that the majority of children involved in Summer Associate programs maintained or improved their reading levels. For example, an evaluation by the Western Maryland Reads Alliance Summer Associate Program, which included pre- and post-project testing, found an average increase of 45 percent in the reading comprehension and vocabulary recognition of the children who participated.

Service Accomplishments

A survey by Aguirre International (2000), an independent social science research firm, collected data on project accomplishments from 883 AmeriCorps*VISTA projects in operation for at least six months prior to September 1999. This biannual survey found that "the VISTA program is meeting its mission of strengthening and supplementing efforts to eliminate and alleviate poverty and poverty related problems in the United States. AmeriCorps*VISTA members generated the commitment of private sector resources, encouraged volunteer service at the local level, and strengthened the capacity of local agencies and organizations to provide anti-poverty services to individuals and families in low-income communities" (see Table 3-2).

Sustainability and Capacity Building in Low-income Communities

A desired outcome of AmeriCorps*VISTA projects is to see work started by AmeriCorps*VISTA members continue after they leave and the Corporation's support has ended. Recent research by PeopleWorks, Inc. (1997) indicates that nearly 70 percent of all projects continued to operate three to five years after the members left their assignments (see Table 3-3). AmeriCorps*VISTA expects that members will train their replacements in local organizations and communities, thus allowing continuation of member-initiated activities after resources are withdrawn.

A significant area of service is capacity building. Members work with local organizations to increase their capacity to deliver community services. AmeriCorps*VISTA members raise funds, develop volunteer recruitment and management initiatives, mount public education campaigns, and provide training and technical assistance. A recent evaluation of AmeriCorps*VISTA accomplishments found that the average amount of support—financial and in-kind—generated per member for project activities was \$15,400 (Aguirre International, 2000). The average amount of cash funding raised by community and economic development AmeriCorps*VISTA projects more than doubled from 1997 to 1999, increasing from \$69,000 to more than \$160,000 per project (Aguirre International, 2000). The only programming area in which fundraising did not increase significantly from 1997 to 1999 was for environmental activities, a development that reflects a conscious shift by AmeriCorps*VISTA away from environmental programming in recent years.

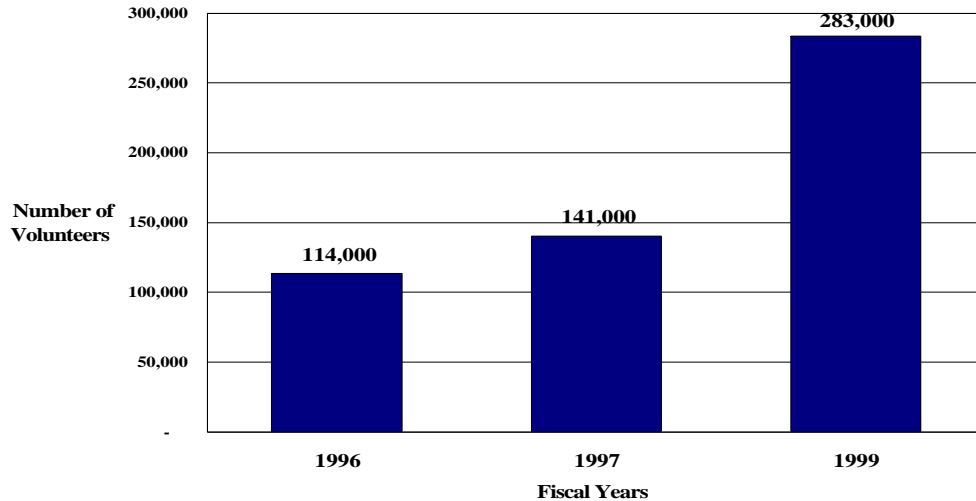
In addition to generating cash and in-kind resources, each member recruited an average of 52 volunteers (Aguirre International, 2000). Based on current estimates from the 1999 Accomplishment Survey, those 52 volunteers in turn donated approximately 1,200 hours of service annually to local projects, at an estimated value of \$18,000. According to studies by Westat, Inc. (1998) and Aguirre International, the total number of community volunteers more than doubled from 1996 to 1999 – from 114,000 to 283,000. The number of community volunteers recruited in 1999 for education and literacy activities rose fourfold from 1997, from 37,500 to 162,000 in 1999. Volunteer generation increased, rising from 12,000 in 1997 to 35,000 in 1999 (Aguirre International 2000).

Table 3-2. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports A Sample Of Accomplishments From 1999 ¹²	
Emphasis Area	Selected Service Accomplishments by AmeriCorps*VISTA members
Education with 3,615 AmeriCorps*VISTA Members	<p>Helped education projects raise more than \$8.9 million in cash and \$13.2 million in in-kind contributions.</p> <p>Recruited more than 160,000 community volunteers.</p> <p>Established or expanded 900 adult literacy program sites.</p> <p>Helped 380,000 children to read as part of a national literacy initiative.</p>
Housing and Homelessness with 715 AmeriCorps*VISTA Members	<p>Helped raise \$14.9 million in cash and \$5 million in in-kind contributions.</p> <p>Recruited 44,000 community volunteers who provided over 675,000 hours of service in their communities.</p> <p>Assisted 1,400 individuals/households in obtaining housing loans.</p>
Community and Economic Development with 636 AmeriCorps*VISTA Members	<p>Helped raise \$14.9 million in cash and \$3.1 million in in-kind contributions.</p> <p>Referred 23,000 individuals to job opportunities, and 9,500 individuals received job readiness training.</p> <p>Established or expanded 900 microenterprise businesses.</p>
Health and Nutrition with 572 AmeriCorps*VISTA Members	<p>Helped raise \$2 million in cash and \$3.4 million in in-kind resources for health and nutrition-related activities</p> <p>Established or expanded more than 200 immunization programs and immunized approximately 21,000 children and youth.</p> <p>Recruited nearly 8,500 community volunteers who provided 310,000 hours of community service.</p>

Source: Aguirre International. 2000. *1999 AmeriCorps*VISTA Accomplishments*. San Mateo, CA.

¹² The data derived from the Corporation's accomplishment reporting system are not subject to audit, and should be considered approximate indicators of level of performance. Results are rounded and more precise estimates are available in the evaluation reports prepared by Aguirre International. Independent reviews conducted of the accomplishment reporting process in earlier years found that the reported results were accurate reflections of effort. Programs were frequently found to underreport accomplishments.

Figure 3-1. Community Volunteers Recruited by AmeriCorps*VISTA Members, 1996, 1997, and 1999



Source: 1996 and 1997 AmeriCorps*VISTA Accomplishments. Westat Incorporated (1997 and 1998). 1999 AmeriCorps*VISTA Accomplishments. Aguirre International (2000).

Cost-Share Production Model

AmeriCorps*VISTA allows local sponsoring organizations to enter into agreements with AmeriCorps*VISTA, using their own resources to pay for basic member support costs. Since 1994, the number of service years in cost-share agreements has risen to nearly 1,000. More than 200 sponsoring organizations participate in cost-share arrangements, which generate more than \$5.5 million in non-federal cash contributions to direct member costs per year.

The Tennessee Community Assistance Corporation (TCAC) is a nonprofit organization that provides services to public housing residents in Tennessee. Over the past two years, TCAC's program served 27 public and assisted housing authorities, affecting 105,000 low-income residents. AmeriCorps*VISTA members are engaged in establishing resident initiatives in the public housing communities that will improve the quality of life within those communities. TCAC annually cost shares approximately 25 AmeriCorps*VISTA members. Consequently, TCAC is able to promote a better working relationship between the housing authority, the residents, other service organizations, and the private sector. Additionally

Examples of AmeriCorps*VISTA Cost- Share Partners

- IBM
- The Case Foundation
- National Urban League
- The Boys and Girls Clubs of America
- PowerUP, Inc.
- The National Alliance of HUD Tenants
- YMCA of USA
- Youth Policy Institute
- Save the Children
- The Congressional Hunger Center

members develop services that make a positive impact on all age groups. Members promote family self-sufficiency and home ownership. They enhance the self-esteem of the communities and build relationships between neighbors through mediation programs. VISTAs serve to decrease crime and substance abuse. They increase the number of working families through education, job banks and economic development; establish youth mentoring programs, and partner with HUD Community Builders to define and address deficiencies in public housing communities. For example, one member serving with Bristol Housing established a Clothing Closet that residents manage. This self-sustaining program provides clothes for job-seeking residents. Partnerships include Cato Fashions, area consignment shops, and the local community. Each week, 100 residents frequent the Closet on a weekly basis.

In 2000, AmeriCorps*VISTA substantially achieved its goal (falling just 13 service years short) of 1,000 service years supported by cost-share agreements. In all, non-Corporation funding sources produced more than 500 service years through cost-share agreements.

AmeriCorps*VISTA changed its cost-share policies in 2000 to give community-based organizations increased flexibility to participate in this initiative. In addition, for fiscal 2001 and beyond, AmeriCorps*VISTA will move to a production model for reporting cost-share performance. Before the program had tracked the number of cost-share agreements entered into with non-federal organizations. The count was of planned or budgeted enrollments, not actual enrollments. Now, AmeriCorps*VISTA is focusing on the number of members enrolled under those agreements and is hoping to increase the levels of member participation in cost-share funded agreements.

Member Recruitment and Development

During the last seven years, AmeriCorps*VISTA experienced unprecedented growth and, with 6,000 members serving in 2000, the program achieved the highest on-board strength in its 35-year history. AmeriCorps*VISTA aims to recruit and place high-quality individuals from diverse backgrounds committed to serving the country in the fight against poverty.

Potential members need to have experience or an interest in participating in grassroots, community-based, anti-poverty efforts. Members should view the AmeriCorps*VISTA opportunity as a one- to two-year commitment to the gritty and challenging assignment of confronting poverty. The AmeriCorps*VISTA experience is tough; it requires sacrifice and mettle. In exchange for their service and in addition to the financial benefits of the program, members gain professional experience, join a legacy of leaders who have gone on to extraordinary careers, and develop a lifelong commitment to service and civic engagement.

The large increase in members over the past seven years occurred with few additional staff and only small changes in service delivery systems. The program has reached a level that now requires delivery systems be adjusted to continue ensuring that members have an impact in the community they are serving and, simultaneously, have a quality growth experience during their year(s) of service. This expanded enrollment also provides an opportunity to mobilize members and sponsoring organizations in new program areas.

Table 3-3. Performance Measures: End Outcomes Established by Independent Program Evaluation Studies A Sample of Outcomes from AmeriCorps*Vista Programs		
Outcomes	Findings	Source
Sustainability	A study of AmeriCorps*VISTA concluded that nearly 70 percent of organizations continued the important activities initiated by the members several years after they had left.	PeopleWorks 1997
	An earlier evaluation of the AmeriCorps*VISTA Summer Associates program concluded that it expanded the capacity of nonprofit and public sponsors to serve low-income communities.	ACTION 1993
Tutoring	In the District of Columbia, low-achieving children, tutored by Federal Work Study students and other volunteers in a program managed by AmeriCorps*VISTA members, improved reading scores to the national average at the end of the first year of the program.	Macro International 1998
	A 1997 study of the Summer Reads program implemented by AmeriCorps*VISTA noted the following: “The vast majority of tutors completing a questionnaire (94%) agreed or strongly agreed that the children they worked with had improved their reading skills as a result of participating in the Summer Reads program. Similarly, most students completing a questionnaire (70%) believed that their reading skills had improved and that at least some of the improvement could be attributed to working with a tutor.”	Macro International 1997

While increasing the number of members, AmeriCorps*VISTA would like to strike a balance among recent college graduates, recent retirees, and volunteers who are from the community that is being served. Presently, recent college graduates are underrepresented. Efforts are now underway to increase applications from them.

During fiscal 2000, AmeriCorps*VISTA produced 5,906 service years, through appropriated funds, on almost 1,200 projects nationwide. In addition, the more than \$80 million appropriated for AmeriCorps*VISTA supported almost 1,200 Summer Associates and the training, health care, child care, and other support services for all members. This includes members in the cost-share program where project costs, including member support, come from non-federal sources.

AmeriCorps*VISTA members are recruited for the skills, experience, and commitment they bring to anti-poverty projects. They come from all walks of life, geographical areas, economic levels, and age groups. Approximately 18 percent are 50 years of age or older. Forty-two percent are between the ages of 18 and 27, with the remaining 40 percent being between the ages of 28 and 49. More than 40 percent are college graduates and about the same percentage are minorities. It is a diverse group, a characteristic that serves both the members and their projects well.

New members begin immediately with a pre-service orientation that is followed within 120 days by intensive early service training. In addition, the AmeriCorps*VISTA program has made extensive efforts to train new AmeriCorps*VISTA project supervisors, who in turn have the responsibility to develop further VISTAs' ability to build community capacity. AmeriCorps*VISTA Leaders, second year members selected to coordinate projects of eight or more other VISTAs, receive an intensive one-week training course at the beginning of their second year. The course covers skills and strategies for recruiting, training, and supporting AmeriCorps*VISTAs in their projects. The Corporation has significantly expanded support for AmeriCorps*VISTA training for both members and supervisors during the past year.

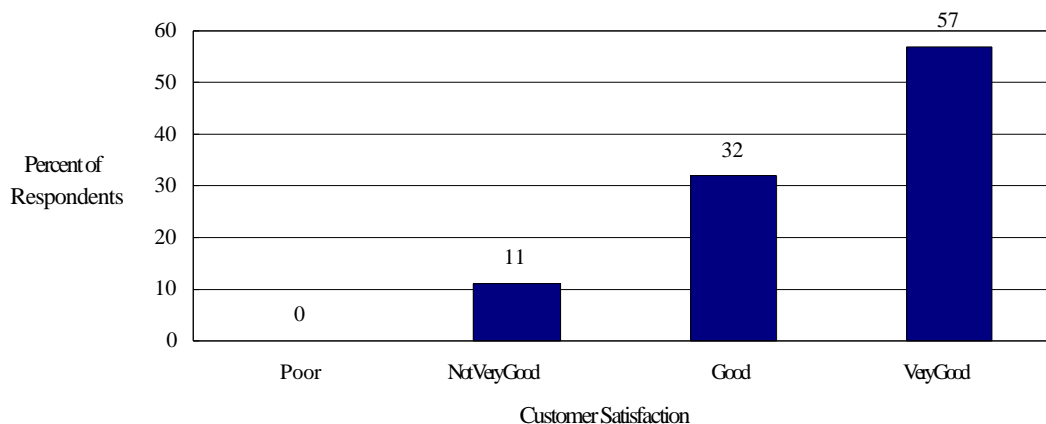
AmeriCorps*VISTAs and the Education Award

In 2000, 82.5 percent of VISTAs who were enrolled in the Trust at the time they completed service earned the Education Award. This is up slightly from the 81.4 percent recorded in fiscal 1999. In the six years of AmeriCorps operations, the VISTA completion rate has ranged from a high of 86.3 percent in 1996 to a low of 79.3 percent in 1998.

Customer Satisfaction

In 1999, the Corporation began a series of customer satisfaction surveys of all national service programs. An independent research firm surveyed via telephone 381 AmeriCorps*VISTA project directors (ORC Macro 2000). Survey questions focused on three essential areas of interest: (1) importance and performance of various Corporation functions; (2) quality of service received from the Corporation; and (3) factors having the greatest influence on overall satisfaction. For all essential performance areas, a majority of respondents gave positive satisfaction ratings (see Figure 3-2).

Figure 3-2. Performance Measures: Customer Satisfaction
Grantees Rate Their Satisfaction with Corporation Services in 1998



Source: *Evaluation of the 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, AmeriCorps*VISTA Program*. ORC Macro, Calverton, MD.

Eighty-nine percent of the AmeriCorps*VISTA project directors rated the overall quality of service received in the past year from the Corporation as either "good" or "very good." A de-

tailed analysis of the results revealed that five factors had the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Corporation's AmeriCorps*VISTA program:

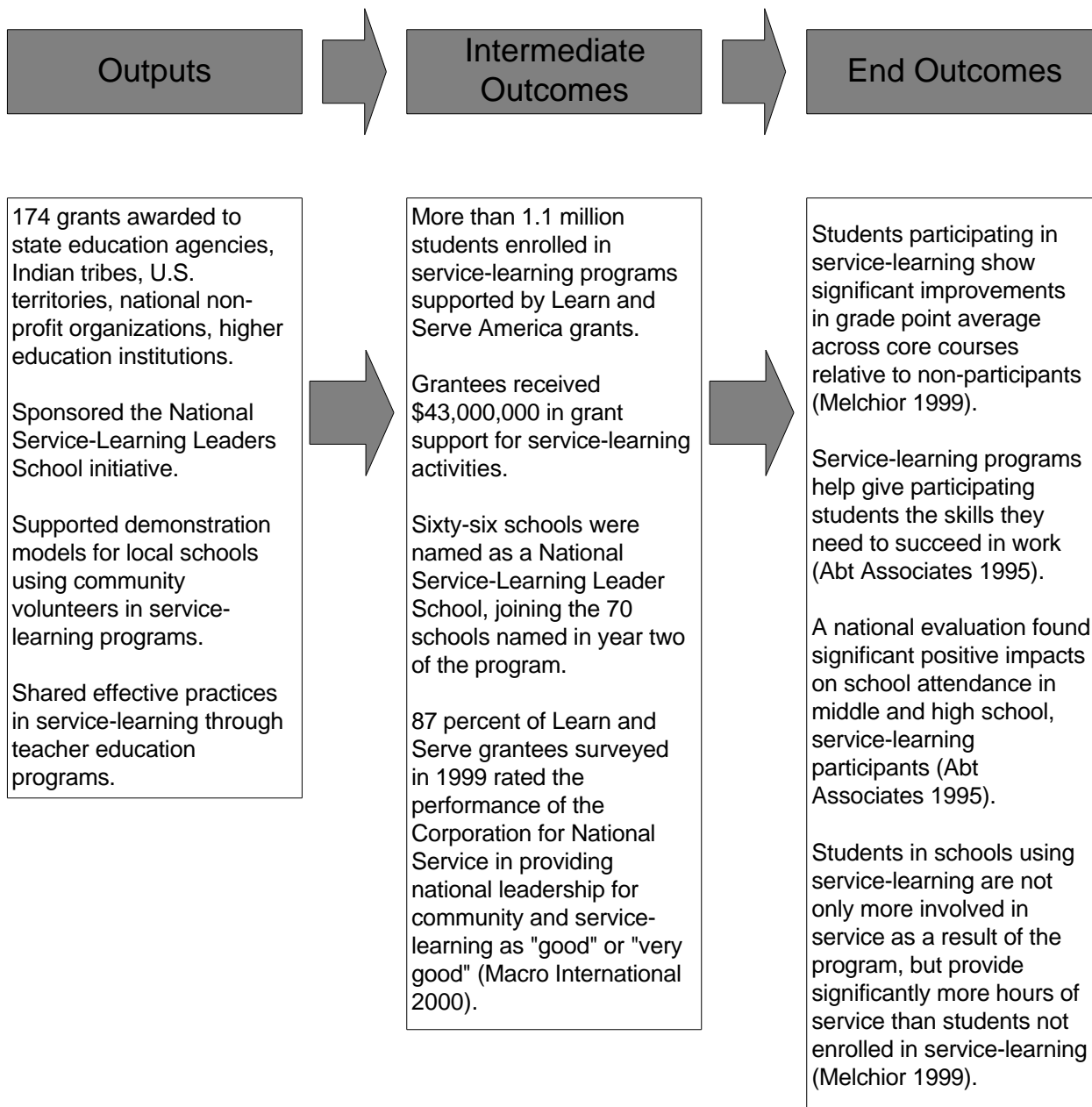
1. The quality of service received from Corporation State Offices.
2. The Corporation's performance in providing a vision of AmeriCorps*VISTA national service.
3. The Corporation's performance in providing consistent information.
4. The Corporation's sensitivity to local needs and conditions.
5. The quality of service received from the Corporation's Office of Evaluation.

Further analyses of the data identified areas that the Corporation could focus on to improve customer satisfaction scores. AmeriCorps*VISTA is most likely to increase the proportion of very satisfied customers by improving the courteousness of the Corporation State Offices when dealing with VISTA projects and members. Similarly, the program is most likely to decrease the proportion of dissatisfied customers by improving State Office support to members (ORC Macro 2000).

References

- Aguirre International, 2000. *1999 AmeriCorps*VISTA Accomplishments*. San Mateo, CA.
- Office of Policy, Research, and Evaluation. ACTION. 1993. *An Evaluation Report on the VISTA Summer Associates Program*. Washington, DC.
- Macro International. 1997. *Description and Evaluation of the Summer Reads Initiative*. Calverton, MD.
- Macro International. 1998. *Evaluation of DC Reads Book Partners*. Calverton, MD.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *Evaluation of the 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, AmeriCorps*VISTA Program*. Calverton, MD.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *1999 Direct Customer Satisfaction Surveys. Highlighted Findings*. An oral briefing on December 19, 2000 to Corporation for National Service Staff Calverton, MD.
- PeopleWorks, Inc. 1997. *The Sustainability of AmeriCorps*VISTA Programs and Activities*. Los Angeles, CA.
- Westat, Inc. 1998. *1997 AmeriCorps*VISTA Accomplishments*. Rockville, MD.
- Westat, Inc. 1997. *1996 AmeriCorps*VISTA Accomplishments*. Rockville, MD.

LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA 2000 PERFORMANCE RESULTS



CHAPTER 4. LEARN AND SERVE AMERICA: K-12 SCHOOL-BASED, COMMUNITY-BASED, AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Many Americans view service as an important means to achieve public purposes. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the nation's schools and colleges. Service has become a tool for enhancing student academic achievement, connecting youth to their communities, and reforming educational institutions. The juncture of service and education is known as service-learning and the Corporation for National Service through Learn and Serve America is a national leader in this field.

Learn and Serve America provides young people with opportunities to serve by supporting efforts to connect community service with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility. These opportunities are the results of Learn and Serve America grants to state education agencies (SEAs), state community service commissions, Indian tribes, U. S. territories, schools, colleges, universities, and nonprofit organizations. Grantees create new service-learning programs, replicate existing models, and conduct training in how to design and implement programs.

Service-Learning Defined

Service-learning is a method by which students improve their academic learning and develop social and civic skills through structured service activities that meet community needs. The initiatives impact both the participants and the community. Students develop practical skills, self-esteem, and a sense of civic responsibility by planning and implementing their service activities. These activities provide students with opportunities to learn by preparing, leading, and reflecting on their service experiences.

In *schools and colleges*, service-learning is integrated into the academic curriculum. Teachers facilitate learning by creating opportunities for -- and with -- students so that they understand and analyze their service experiences in the context of their courses. In *community organizations*, service-learning is integrated into youth programming and leadership development. Community leaders facilitate learning by establishing learning objectives closely linked with community goals.

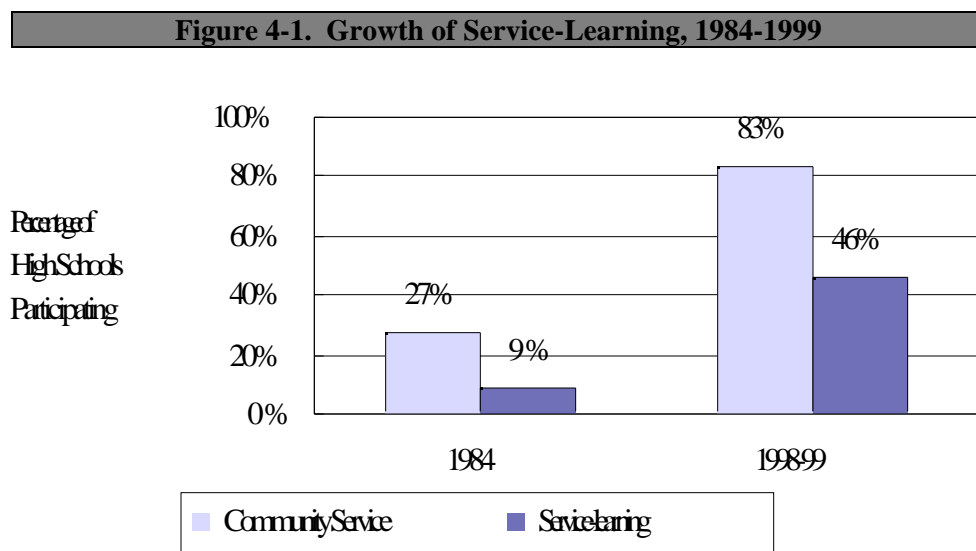
Two factors distinguish service-learning from other forms of community service and volunteering. First, service-learning facilitates learning about the issues behind the community needs the students are addressing. Understanding the historical, sociological, and cultural contexts within which the needs surface is of critical importance. Secondly, service-

Fourth grade students at Berrier Elementary School in Nashville, GA are paired with residents of a local nursing home to work together on technology-based projects. Students help residents write their autobiographies, which include historical facts, family histories, and pictures. Computers are donated by local businesses, loaded with appropriate software, and installed at the nursing home for residents and students to use. Students also help train the staff so they can assist the residents. Over the course of the semester, students hear from experts on aging about health issues in the elderly, and they use language, technology, reading, and social studies skills in this interdisciplinary project. Once completed, the books are placed on display in the local library, and then presented to the residents as part of a year end celebration.

learning is a reciprocal activity. It is the act of giving and receiving so that both parties in the service relationship teach and learn from one another.

The Growth of Service-Learning

A study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (1999) surveyed a broad sample of public schools regarding the prevalence of community service and service-learning. The findings showed that 64 percent of all schools, including 83 percent of public high schools, have community service activities organized or recognized by the school (see Figure 4-1). Thirty-two percent of all public schools, including nearly half of all high schools, organize service-learning as part of their curriculum. These figures have grown considerably since 1984 when a study reported that service-learning was offered in only 9 percent of all high schools (Newmann and Rutter, 1985).



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (1999) and Newman and Rutter (1985).

Service-learning is widely recognized as a vehicle to help meet the goals of a variety of educational initiatives. Most importantly, local school districts across the country are increasingly using service-learning as a means of meeting state academic standards. Local efforts use service-learning activities to complement other national education programs, including School-to-Work and various titles of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act. Because of the positive impacts on students' learning, behavior, and civic attitudes, many educators view service-learning as an effective vehicle for educational reform.

Community service efforts on college and university campuses are widespread. The College Board's 1999 annual study indicated that nearly half of the 1,800 colleges and universities surveyed take volunteer experience into consideration to various degrees when evaluating a student's admission application. Additionally, California Governor Gray Davis recently allocated \$2.2 million in the fiscal 2000-2001 state budget to develop service-learning courses and create service-learning offices at each California State University campus. The funding will be appropriated yearly through fiscal 2003-2004.

Higher education is increasingly integrating service into the curriculum. According to recent statistics, almost two million students (out of approximately 6.7 million) participate in service-learning at four-year public and private institutions. Moreover, half of the nation's 1,200 community colleges offer service-learning courses.

As the field of service-learning continues to grow, one of the roles of Learn and Serve America is to foster the adoption of service-learning as a teaching methodology in K-12 and higher education institutions. Through grants and technical assistance, the scope of service-learning continues to broaden and the quality of service-learning programs continues to deepen.

How the Corporation for National Service Supports Service-Learning

The Corporation for National Service supports service-learning primarily through its Learn and Serve America grants program. Grantees create new programs, replicate existing models, and train staff, faculty, adult volunteers, and students in service-learning. The Corporation leverages its investments through matching fund requirements for grantees in states and localities. The program requires that school- and community-based grantees provide increasingly higher matches over time so that, by the fourth year of an initiative, the cash or in-kind match is fifty percent, or dollar-for-dollar, thus improving the prospects for sustainability. Higher education grantees must match Corporation funds dollar-for-dollar from the outset of their grant. This requires that colleges and universities make a significant investment in the long-term sustainability of the initiative.

In fiscal 2000, the appropriation for Learn and Serve America was \$43 million. The Corporation funded 106 school-based and community-based programs and 68 higher education programs (see Figure 4-2). Service-learning programs supported by the Corporation with fiscal 1999 appropriation enrolled approximately 1,188,000 participants (See Table 4-1). By legislation, the Corporation reserved approximately:

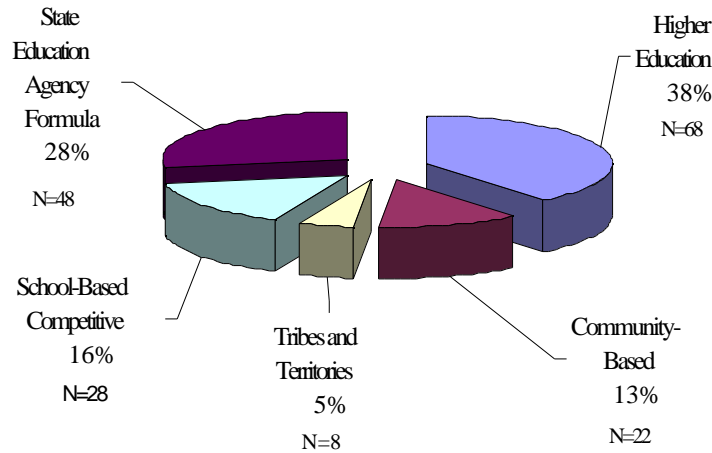
- \$10,750,000 for grants for higher education programs.
- \$4,837,000 for grants to state commissions and grantmaking entities for community-based programs.
- \$821,000 for school-based grants to Indian tribes and U.S. Territories.
- \$6,647,000 for competitive school-based grants to states, Indian tribes, or grantmaking entities.
- \$19,943,000 for formula allotment grants to state educational agencies.

Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders (SHINE), operated by Temple University in Philadelphia, PA, is a national, multicultural, service-learning initiative in five cities across the U.S. One thousand college students each year provide language, literacy, and citizenship tutoring to elderly immigrants and refugees, serving as coaches in existing ESL/citizenship classes or as tutors in community centers, temples, churches, housing developments, and ethnic organizations.

Over 60 faculty in varied disciplines, offer SHINE as a service-learning option in their courses, and SHINE placements are available through the federal work-study program.

More than one-third of all students stays with the program for more than one semester. This program has provided over 25,000 hours of instruction to 3,500 older learners over the past three years. Students consistently report a deeper understanding of U.S. history and civics, a newfound respect for older adults, and a greater appreciation for diversity.

**Figure 4-2. Distribution of Service-Learning Grants
Fiscal 2000**



Source: Department of Service-Learning, Corporation for National Service.

**Table 4-1. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators
for Learn and Serve America, Fiscal 2000**

Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of K-12 and higher education grants. Source: <i>Department of Service-Learning. Corporation for National Service.</i>	165	174	YES
Number of students in projects supported by Learn and Serve America. Source: Semi Annual Progress Reports, <i>Department of Service-Learning. Corporation for National Service.</i>	824,000	1,188,000	YES
Number of Leader Schools selected. Source: <i>Department of Service-Learning. Corporation for National Service.</i>	270	66 new 136 total	NO
Number of high school students receiving President's Student Service Scholarships. Source: <i>Citizen Scholars Foundation.</i>	10,000	5,380	NO

In addition to funding 175 grants and more than 3,000 subgrants, the Department of Service-Learning provides leadership nationally for the growing field of service-learning. By working closely with numerous national organizations, Department of Service-Learning staff members keep abreast of the directions of the field. They build links between policy and curriculum development. They help make the important connections among service, civic education, character education, campus engagement, and educational reform. Organizations cooperating with the Corporation in promoting service-learning include Campus Compact, National Youth Leadership

Council, Education Commission of the States' Compact for Learning and Citizenship, Constitutional Rights Foundation, and YMCA of the USA.

The Department of Service-Learning administers two major recognition programs: the President's Student Service Challenge and the National Service-Learning Leader Schools.

- The President's Student Service Challenge. Millions of students serve every day, improving communities and making America stronger. The President's Student Service Challenge offers an opportunity for schools, colleges, and community organizations to recognize young people for their outstanding community service and to encourage more young people to serve. The Challenge has two components, scholarships and awards.
 - *President's Student Service Awards*. Students of all ages who serve at least 100 hours in a 12-month period are eligible for the President's Student Service Award. Students may be certified by schools, colleges, or community organizations and receive a specially designed gold pin with the presidential seal, a presidential certificate, and a letter from the President. Youth ages 5 to 14 who perform 50 hours of community service within a 12-month period receive a silver pin with the presidential seal as well as a presidential certificate and a letter from the President.
 - *President's Student Service Scholarships*. Each high school in the country may select two junior or senior class students to receive a \$1,000 scholarship for outstanding service to the community. The Corporation for National Service provides \$500 for each scholarship, which is matched with \$500 from the community. Scholarship recipients must have served at least 100 hours within a 12-month period. In addition, students receive the President's Student Service Award gold pin, as well as a presidential certificate and a letter from the President.

The goal was to award 10,000 Presidential Scholarships during fiscal 2000. This year 5,380 were awarded, an increase from 3,164 in fiscal 1999. The goal was not reached, primarily, because of a lack of awareness of the program. However, the number of scholarships continues to increase each year, and each year brings partnerships with new organizations. The goal of 10,000 remains a reasonable one that can be reached by fiscal 2002.

- National Service-Learning Leader Schools. This presidential initiative recognizes schools for excellence in service-learning. Middle schools and high schools receive White House recognition for improving learning and teaching at their schools and strengthening their communities through high-quality, broad-based service-learning. Selection criteria include an extensive portfolio with detailed descriptions, statistics, and a variety of evidence such as syllabi, photographs, and student essays. The schools serve as models of excellence for two years by providing both awareness programs and professional development to other schools. In 2000, the Corporation named 66 schools as National Service Leader Schools (see Table 4-1), 204 short of the goal. The shortfall in schools selected reflects the lack of qualified applicants, and the Corporation is working with state education agencies to improve the overall quality of the applicants for the next cycle. In addition, the feedback provided to unsuccessful nominees in the first round of selections is expected to lead to better and, therefore, more, successful applications. Finally, the plan to expand the program to recognize elementary schools was not implemented this year and the Department of Service-Learning will examine the plan's feasibility in fiscal 2001.

The Impact of Service-Learning on Students

Many studies have examined the impact of service-learning programs, including those funded in part by Learn and Serve America, across all levels of education. The findings of these studies are positive and the outcomes are highly consistent (see Table 4-2 for a summary of these findings).

The studies show that service-learning activities that are well designed, linked to intentional learning outcomes, and engaging students in significant amounts of service greatly benefit student participants. The research on service-learning supports the following generalizations about its impact. Service-learning

- Has a positive effect on students' engagement in school.
- Helps students acquire academic skills and knowledge.
- Reduces the likelihood that students will engage in risk behaviors.
- Enhances students' social and civic development.
- Benefits communities.

Table 4-2. Performance Measures: End Outcomes Established by Independent Program Evaluation Studies A Sample of Outcomes from Service-Learning Programs		
Outcomes	Findings	Sources
Participation in School	<p>Students engaged in service-learning have higher attendance rates than their peers who are not engaged.</p> <p>Students at all levels feel they learn more in service-learning classes than other classes.</p> <p>Students engaged in service-learning are more likely to graduate.</p> <p>Educators and students in schools with strong service-learning programs report a more positive school climate because of (1) a greater feeling of connectedness to the school, (2) decreased teacher turnover, and (3) increased teacher collegiality.</p>	<p>Shafer 1993, Supik 1996 Shumer 1994 Weiler and others 1998 Berkas 1997</p> <p>Astin and Sax 1998 Roose and others 1997</p> <p>Billig and Conrad 1997 Wieler and others 1999</p>
Risk Behaviors	<p>Middle school and high school students involved in service-learning are less likely to engage in behaviors that lead to pregnancy or arrest.</p> <p>Students involved in service-learning are less likely to be referred to the school office for disciplinary measures.</p> <p>(table continued on next page)</p>	<p>Melchior 1999 Allen and others 1994 Shaffer 1993</p> <p>Follman 1997 Follman 1998</p>

Table 4-2 (continued)		
Outcomes	Findings	Sources
Academic Improvement	Service-learning participation is associated with higher scores on state tests of basic skills and higher grades.	Astin et al 2000 Anderson and others 1991 Shumer 1994 Shaffer 1993 Dean and Murdock 1992 O'Bannon 1999
	Students who participate in high quality service-learning programs show greater school engagement and achievement in mathematics than non-participants.	Melchior 1999
	Middle and high school students who participate in service-learning tutoring programs increase their grade point averages and test scores in reading/language arts and math and are less likely to drop out of school.	Supik 1996 Rolzinski 1990
	Students and faculty report that service-learning improves students' ability to apply what they have learned in their communities to their studies.	Eyler and Giles 1999 Gray and others 1998 Oliver 1997 Nigro and Wortham 1998
Social and Civic Development	Students who engage in service-learning programs report a greater acceptance of cultural diversity.	Melchior 1999 Berkas 1997
	High school students who participate in service-learning programs are more likely (1) to develop bonds with adults and (2) report that they learn from and work with the elderly and disabled.	Morgan and Streb 1999
	College students had increased commitment to community service after participating in service-learning activities.	Sax and Astin 1997 Gray et al 1999
	Students who engage in service-learning increase their understanding of how government works.	Berkas 1997
Benefits to Communities	Community members who participate in service-learning as partners with the school view youth as valued resources and positive contributors to community.	Billig and Conrad 1997 Weiler and others 1999 Melchior 1999 Kinsley 1997
	Ninety percent of the partnering agencies indicate that Learn and Serve America participants help the agency improve their services to clients and the community.	Melchior 1999
Philanthropic Giving	Undergraduate service participation correlates with future charitable donations to college.	Sax and Astin 1997

Customer Satisfaction

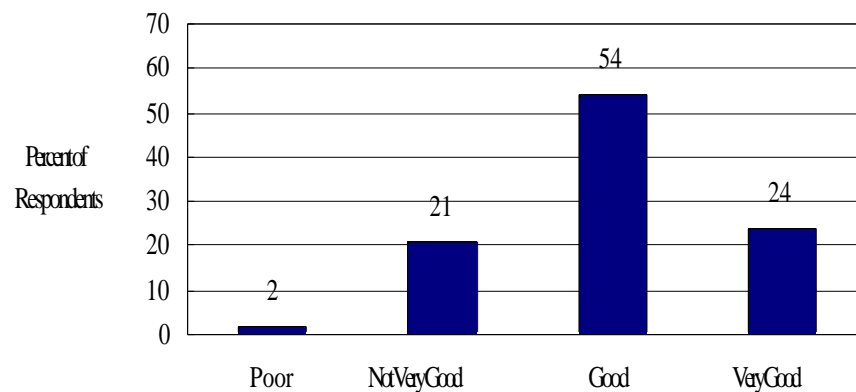
In 1999, the Corporation began a series of customer satisfaction surveys of all national service programs. An independent research firm sampled opinion from 136 Learn and Serve America grantees. In the telephone survey, 83 percent of the sample responded. Questions focused on three essential areas of interest: (1) importance and performance of various Corporation functions; (2) quality of service received from the Corporation; and (3) factors having the greatest influence on overall satisfaction. For all essential performance areas, a majority of respondents gave positive satisfaction ratings.

Seventy-eight percent of the Learn and Serve America grantees rated the overall quality of service received in the past year from the Corporation as either “good” or “very good.” On a four-point scale (“poor” = 1 and “very good” = 4), the average rating of overall quality of service was 3.0 (See Figure 4-3).

A detailed analysis of the results revealed that five aspects of Corporation support to service-learning grantees had the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Corporation’s performance:

- Ability to issue grants in a timely manner.
- Fostering collaborative efforts with other service-learning networks.
- Service received from the Corporation’s Grants Office.
- Providing national leadership for community service and service-learning.
- Providing training and technical assistance.

Figure 4-3. Performance Measures: Customer Satisfaction
Grantees Rate their Satisfaction with Corporation Services in 1999



Source: *Evaluation of the 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Learn and Serve America*. ORC Macro, Calverton, MD.

Further analyses of the data has identified areas that the Corporation can focus on to improve customer satisfaction scores. Learn and Serve America is most likely to increase the proportion of very satisfied customers by improving an already strong area, the provision of national leadership for community service and service learning. Similarly, the program is most likely to

decrease the proportion of dissatisfied customers by improving consistency of information communicated by the Corporation to grantees (ORC Macro 2000).

References

- Allen, J.P., G. Kuperminc, S. Philliber, and K. Herre. 1994. "Programmatic Prevention of Adolescent Problem Behaviors: The Role of Autonomy, Relatedness, and Volunteer Service in the Teen Outreach Program," *Journal of Community Psychology*, 22, 617-638.
- Anderson, V., C. Kinsley, P. Negroni, and C. Price. 1991. "Community Service-Learning and School Improvement in Springfield, Massachusetts," *Phi Delta Kappan*, 72, June, 761-764.
- Astin, A.W., and Sax, L.J. 1998. "How Undergraduates are Affected by Service Participation," *Journal of College Student Development*, 39(3), 251-263.
- Astin, A.W., L.J. Vogelgesang, E.K. Ikeda, J.A. Yee. 2000. *Executive Summary: How Service Learning Affects Students*. Los Angeles, CA: Higher Education Research Institute.
- Berkas, Thomas. 1997. *Strategic Review of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's Service-Learning Projects, 1990-1996*, Battle Creek, MI: W.K. Kellogg Foundation.
- Billig, Shelley and Jill Conrad. 1997. *An Evaluation of the New Hampshire Service-Learning and School Improvement Initiative*. Denver, CO: RMC Research.
- Dean, L. and S. Murdock. 1992. "The Effect of Voluntary Service on Adolescent Attitudes Toward Learning," *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, Summer, 5-10.
- Eyler, Janet and Dwight Giles, Jr. 1999. *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?*, San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers.
- Follman, Joseph. 1997. *Florida Learn and Serve: 1995-1996 Outcome Data*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Center for Civic Education and Service.
- Follman, Joseph. 1998. *Florida Learn and Serve: 1996-1997 Outcome and Correlations with 1994-1995 and 1995-1996*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida State University, Center for Civic Education and Service.
- Gray, Maryann J., E. H. Ondaatje, and L. Zakaras. 1999. *Combining Service and Learning in Higher Education: Summary Report*, RAND.
- Kinsley, Carol. 1997. "Elementary School Programs" in Rahima Wade, ed., *Community Service-Learning: A Guide to Including Service in the Public Schools Curriculum*, Albany NY: State University of New York Press.
- Melchior, Alan. 1999. *National Evaluation of Learn and Serve America*. Waltham, MA: Brandeis University.
- Morgan, W. and M. Streb. 1999. *How Quality Service-Learning Develops Civic Values*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University.
- National Center for Education Statistics. 1999. "Service-Learning and Community Service in K-12 Public Schools." *Statistics in Brief*. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. U.S. Department of Education.
- Neumann, Fred M. and Robert A. Rutter. 1985. "A Profile of High School Community Service Programs." *Journal of Educational Leadership* 43.
- Nigro, G. and S. Wortham. 1998. "Service-learning Through Action Research," in R.G. Bringle and D.K. Duffy, eds., *Collaborating with the Community: Psychology and Service-learning*, Washington, DC: American Association for Higher Education.
- O'Bannon, F. 1999. "Service-Learning Benefits Our Schools," *State Education Leaders*, 17, 3.
- Oliver, H.T. 1997. *Taking Action in Rural Mississippi: Uniting Academic Studies and Community Service through Project D.R.E.A.M.S.*, Paper presented at the Annual International Conference of the International Partnership for Service-Learning, Kingston, Jamaica.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *Evaluation of the 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Learn and Serve America Program*.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *1999 Direct Customer Satisfaction Surveys. Highlighted Findings*. An oral briefing on December 19, 2000 to Corporation for National Service Staff Calverton, MD.

- Rolzinski, C. 1990. "The Adventure of Adolescence: Middle School Students and Community Service," Washington, DC: Youth Service America.
- Roose, D., J. Daphne, A.G. Miller, W. Norris, R. Peacock, C. White and G. White (1997). *Black Student Retention Study: Oberlin College*, Oberlin, OH.
- Sax, Linda J. and Alexander Astin. 1997. "The Benefits of Service: Evidence from Undergraduates." *Educational Record* 78.
- Shafer, B. 1993. *Service-Learning: An Academic Methodology*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Department of Education cited in Bhaerman, R., Cordell, K., and Gomez, B. (1998). *The Role of Service-Learning in Educational Reform*, Raleigh, NC: National Society of Experimental Education and Needham, MA: Simon and Shuster, Inc.
- Shumer, Robert. 1994. "Community Based Learning: Humanizing Education," *Journal of Adolescence*, 17, 4, 357-367.
- Supik, Josie. 1996. "Valued Youth Partnerships: Programs in Caring," San Antonio, TX: Intercultural Research and Development Association.
- Weiler, D., A. LaGoy, E. Crane, and A. Rovner. 1998. *An Evaluation of K-12 Service-Learning in California: Phase II Final Report*, Emeryville, CA: RPP International with The Search Institute.

CHAPTER 5. NATIONAL SENIOR SERVICE CORPS

The National Senior Service Corps (Senior Corps) is a network of more than half a million seniors who are making a difference as Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions, and Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) volunteers. These programs tap the experience, skills, talents, interests, and creativity of seniors age 55 and over. The Senior Corps is a pioneer in developing volunteer opportunities for older adults. The Senior Corps continues to serve as a leader in testing and refining new models of senior service that will meet the needs of communities, as well as the interests and priorities of the older adults of today and tomorrow.

The Senior Corps' three programs provide a wealth of volunteer opportunities to seniors while meeting an array of community needs.

- The Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), established in 1965, links income eligible seniors age 60 and older to children and youth with special and exceptional needs.
- The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), established in 1971, places senior volunteers age 55 and older in situations where they perform a myriad of services, including organizing neighborhood block watches, identifying sources of groundwater contamination, teaching computer classes, tutoring and mentoring children and youth, and participating in natural disaster recovery.
- The Senior Companion Program (SCP), established in 1974, creates opportunities for income eligible seniors age 60 and older to serve adults in need of extra support to continue living independently and with enhanced quality of life.

Additionally, through its Senior Demonstration Programs, Senior Corps tests and pilots innovations in senior service, using the demonstration authority to try elements and program models beyond the scope of its three main programs. These demonstration activities serve as incubators for innovation and new ideas, with the intent of incorporating promising and successful lessons into the three existing programs.

The Senior Corps' three programs have placed millions of older Americans in volunteer opportunities for more than 30 years. When the Senior Corps programs began, in the 1960s and 1970s, the predominant interest was in enhancing the well-being and satisfaction of the senior volunteers. This outcome aligned with the concept of "productive aging" as an essential component in later life quality. Senior Corps programs contributed a wealth of information to demonstrate the value of volunteering as a component of productive aging.

A Vision of Senior Service for a New Century

With sweeping demographic changes currently underway, an essential element in remaining a strong and vital senior service leader is adapting and positioning Senior Corps programs for the coming wave of older adults. The influx of "baby boomers" into the 55-and-older age groups will change forever the definition and characteristics of retirement and later life. Senior Corps has developed a "vision of senior service" that will help to attract these older adults, who are wealthier, better educated, more vigorous, and healthier than any before. This vision includes a full menu of options: volunteer service opportunities that range from full time to part time, a flexible set of benefit options and incentives, and mechanisms for participants to move easily from one

opportunity to another as circumstances change. Key elements of this vision are now in place, and a strategic direction has been set.

For the past 25-35 years, Senior Corps programs operated as individual-placement models, primarily providing volunteer opportunities to older persons, contributing to productive aging, and assisting low-income seniors. Senior Corps is now transforming its programs to harness the tremendous resource that the growing population of older persons represents. Their focus has expanded from the individual volunteer to include an emphasis on the needs in communities, from volunteer activities to service with outcomes.

Programming for Impact: Making a Difference in the Communities Served

Traditionally, Senior Corps programs placed primary emphasis on the benefits derived by the volunteers doing service, rather than on the benefits received by communities as a result of volunteer service. In 1996, Senior Corps began Programming for Impact, a shift in its programmatic framework to help answer the questions: What do Senior Corps volunteers accomplish for the communities they serve? And, how can their contributions to the community be measured? There are five interrelated elements in the Programming for Impact model:

- (1) Community need that the volunteers will address.
- (2) Inputs needed, such as the volunteer and other resources.
- (3) Roles for the volunteers and their service activities.
- (4) Short term, measurable accomplishments.
- (5) Longer term impact or permanent change in the community because of the volunteers and their service.

This report presents Programming for Impact outcomes. Programming for Impact indicators of success exist for each of the Senior Corps programs, as well as current demonstration activities.

The Second Senior Corps National Conference: “Making Our Mark”

In June of 2000, the Senior Corps convened its second national training conference in Orlando, Florida, with more than 1,500 Senior Corps project directors and colleagues in attendance. The conference theme, “Making Our Mark: Inspiring Senior Leadership in the 21st Century,” articulated the new vision of senior service, while more than 140 hands-on training sessions explored ways to enhance project quality and management. The six goals of the training conference were to provide project directors with information and skills needed to:

1. Be dynamic, effective, and efficient managers and leaders, embracing new roles in a changing world.
2. Be good stewards of federal funds, ensuring a high return in value for increased public investments in Senior Corps.
3. Assure a high quality experience for the volunteers of today and tomorrow.
4. Use the principles of Programming for Impact to address priority community needs and comply with requirements for accountability.
5. Improve management and communication through better use of technology.
6. Expand, diversify, and maximize resources.

According to evaluations completed by attendees, the national conference delivered sessions and training opportunities to meet its goals. In response to the question, “Overall, how well did the

conference meet your professional needs?,” seventy-seven percent of respondents said that the conference met all or most of their professional needs.

Senior Demonstrations

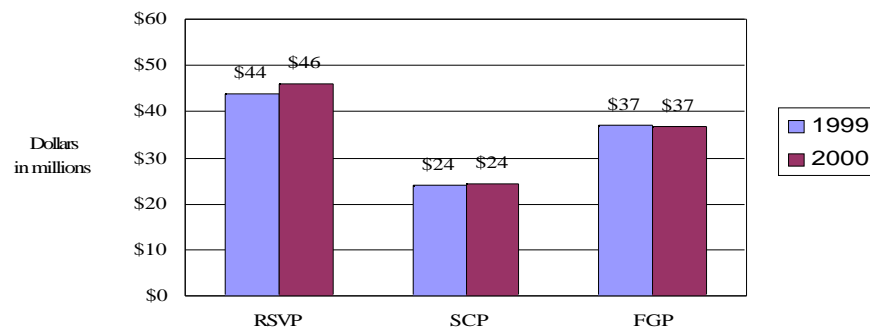
Senior Corps tests new models for mobilizing older persons in service through its authority to conduct demonstrations, which build on the effective practices and lessons learned through RSVP, FGP, and SCP. Demonstration activities position the Senior Corps to tap the vast civic potential of the aging baby boom generation. Recent demonstration activities, which are discussed in more detail in the "Demonstration Programs" section of this report, include Seniors for Schools, Seniors for Habitat; Experience Corps for Independent Living, and Senior Leaders in RSVP.

A Network of National Alliances

Senior Corps programs have long received financial support from the non-federal sector. This support, which includes state and local government appropriations, the for-profit sector, and non-profit agencies, augments federal resources and allows local Senior Corps projects to expand the scope and quality of services provided by volunteers to the community. Broad-based and ongoing relationships with diverse constituencies are essential to "mainstreaming" senior service into local service delivery networks, as well as enhancing the visibility of seniors as resources at the national level. In 1998, Senior Corps established the "National Organization Initiative" to expand its programs by tapping the expertise of national nonprofit organizations and building on their existing networks of affiliates who operate programs at the local level. Through this initiative, national organizations are exploring ways to (1) strengthen the role of senior volunteering throughout their organizations and (2) support networking among their local affiliates selected as Senior Corps project sites.

State, local, and private sector funding, investments in Senior Corps programs have allowed local Senior Corps projects to expand service in their communities. In fiscal 2000, these allies contributed the following dollars to Senior Corps programs (see Figure 5-1): RSVP, \$46 million, Senior Companion Program, \$24.4 million, and Foster Grandparent Program, \$36.8 million.

Figure 5-1. State, Local, and Private Sector Funding for Senior Corps Programs, Fiscal 1999 and 2000



Source: Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps. Corporation for National Service.

Partnerships with Faith-based Communities

Faith-based organizations were some of the initial partners of the National Senior Service Corps' three primary programs. Today, faith-based local agencies and organizations continue to sponsor Senior Corps projects. Currently, faith-based organizations sponsor 114 Senior Corps project nationwide. Together, in fiscal 1999, these 114 projects recruited and placed more than 45,000 senior volunteers, who provided more than 10.8 million hours of service to their communities. Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers with faith-based projects helped more than 41,000 children and adults in need during 1999-2000, while RSVP volunteers helped nearly 6,000 local organizations to expand their services and meet key community needs.

- **Foster Grandparents** provide direct service to children and youth with special or exceptional needs. Of the 333 local Foster Grandparent projects operating nationwide, faith-based organizations sponsor 31 and account for 10 percent of the total number of Foster Grandparent projects.
- **Senior Companions** provide service to adults, primarily older adults, needing additional support to remain independent in their homes and community. Increasingly, their service provides a much-needed respite for family members serving as caregivers. Of the 209 local Senior Companion projects operating nationwide, faith-based organizations sponsor 28 and account for 13 percent of the total Senior Companion projects.
- **RSVP** volunteers are true "community volunteers," ages 55 and older, who help to meet a constellation of needs identified by the local community. Of the 764 local RSVP projects operating nationwide, 53 are sponsored by faith-based organizations and account for 7 percent of the total RSVP projects.

National Demonstration Partners include **Habitat for Humanity**, a national network with faith-based roots. Other ecumenically based partners include Volunteers of America, Lutheran Services in America, and Catholic Charities.

Seniors for Habitat – In the fall of 1999, National Senior Service Corps and Habitat for Humanity formed a partnership to link RSVP projects and local Habitat affiliates. The Midwest Habitat Regional Support Center identified approximately thirty priority sites interested in developing partnerships with RSVP projects. After a competitive application process, eight RSVP projects were selected for funding, each project receiving \$20,000 to support this initiative for the first year. The eight sites are located in Des Moines, IA; Duluth, MN; Brookings, SD; Mankato, MN; New York Mills, MN; Fergus Falls, MN; Winona, MN, and Neenah, WI. A total of 185 senior volunteers serve through the demonstration, which is focused on 10 building sites.

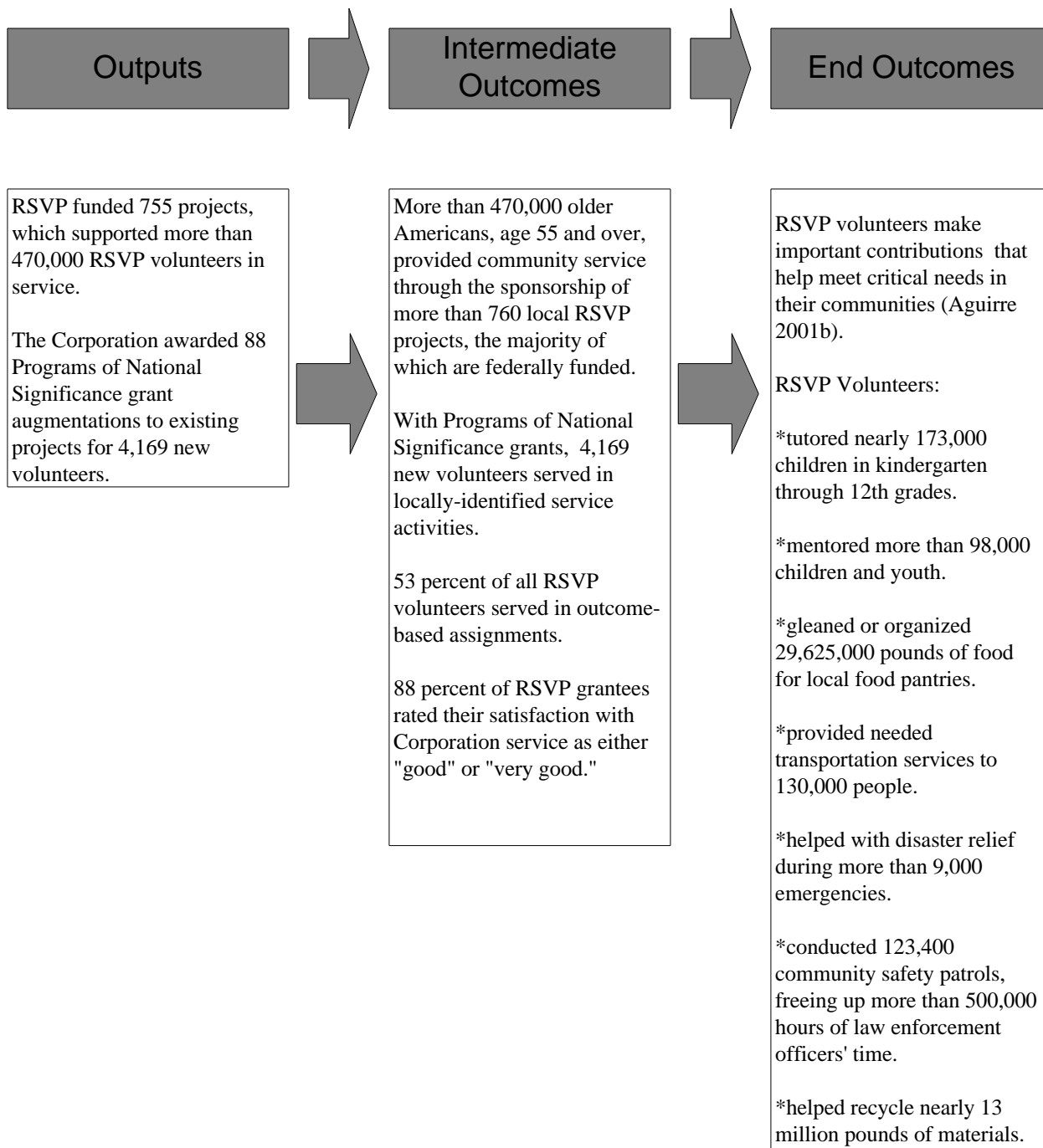
Sample Accomplishments:

- With senior volunteers serving two to five days a week on Habitat construction sites, Habitat completed construction projects in less than half the estimated time, thus increasing Habitat's home-building capacity, according to Habitat for Humanity staff.
- Habitat construction sites promoted intergenerational activities, such as mentoring and skills training. Seniors for Habitat is recruiting technical college students to work on the Habitat sites. The students are taught carpentry and general construction skills. One site in Minnesota has seniors working side-by-side with troubled youth from a local organization called the Rawhide Ranch.

Administration and Management

In 2000, the Senior Corps released a number of key documents to help assure that its guidance to grantees and Corporation State Office project managers reflects statutes, new regulations, and sound program management practices. Revised operation handbooks for the Foster Grandparent, Senior Companion, and RSVP Programs were distributed to all local grantees. These handbooks were designed to provide Senior Corps project sponsors with ideas and suggestions for operating their projects, and to augment federal regulations and other directives that specify technical grant compliance. Additionally, the Corporation released the first-ever, field office manual for its staff charged with oversight of Senior Corps projects. Senior Corps also issued several new OMB-approved information collection forms that reflect programmatic priorities and support increased integrity of data collected from grantees.

RSVP 1999 PERFORMANCE RESULTS



THE RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM (RSVP)

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) matches older Americans who are willing to help with local problems in their communities. RSVP volunteers choose how and where they will serve and they determine how many hours a week they will volunteer. They do not receive any monetary incentives, but the project may reimburse individuals for some costs associated with their service activities. In addition, RSVP provides appropriate insurance coverage for volunteers while on assignment.

Each year, more than 470,000 older Americans, age 55 and over, provide community service through the sponsorship of more than 760 local RSVP projects, the majority of which are federally funded. The amount of service can vary from a few hours a month to almost full time, with the average hours of service being approximately four hours a week.

RSVP volunteers serve through public agencies and nonprofit organizations. They tutor children and youth, organize neighborhood watch programs, renovate homes, help people recover from natural disasters, or do whatever their skills and interests lead them to. In 2000, the Corporation awarded 88 Programs of National Significance grant increases to existing projects. These grants provided for more than 4,169 new volunteers to serve in locally identified service activities.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) Performance in 2000

The Corporation identified three annual performance indicators for RSVP in 2000 (see Table 5-1) and the program met all three of its annual targets. The program funded 755 projects, supported 473,709 RSVP volunteers in service, and had 53 percent of all RSVP volunteers serving in outcome-based assignments. These outcome-based assignments engage volunteers in activities that contribute to meeting a community need as identified by important stakeholders in the community. The results of service must be measurable and there must be a system in place for reporting the information.

RSV programs in Texas make a major investment in children and youth across the state. In 2000, approximately 1,213 RSVP volunteers served at least 11,137 children and youth. RSVP reading tutors in San Angelo schools provided reading tutoring for 104 children, 54 of whom were documented to have raised their reading grade level by an average of .89, nearly one grade. They helped 16 children with learning disabilities raise reading levels by an average of .46 grade level. Over 300 RSVP volunteer support child immunization programs. They visit new mothers in hospitals, sign them up for a reminder program and make gives for mothers and babies when they show up for immunizations. In Midland and Bonham, RSVP volunteers mentor 170 children at after-school programs, while 24 volunteers in Fannin County delivered more than 15,000 lunches to 300 youngsters who might otherwise have done without last summer.

Table 5-1. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Fiscal 2000			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of federally funded RSVP projects. Source: <i>Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps.</i>	740	755	YES
Number of federally funded RSVP volunteers budgeted. Source: <i>Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps and Project Profile and Volunteer Activity Survey.</i>	470,350	473,709	YES
Percent of RSVP volunteers serving in outcome-based assignments. Source: <i>GPRA Status Report from grantees to Senior Corps headquarters.</i> ¹³	30%	53%	YES

Administrative Cost Increases to Relieve Resource Constraints in Local RSVP Projects

According to an independent national program evaluation, RSVP projects are "large and complex, presenting serious management challenges to project directors." More than half of the RSVP project directors responding to the survey reported that they were at the saturation point in terms of numbers of volunteer stations or volunteers they could manage effectively. The study found numerous cases where the size of the projects exceeded the capacity of the project staff to manage stations and volunteers during the year (Westat 1997).

To help answer this management challenge, Senior Corps was able in fiscal 2000 to provide an administrative cost increase to all federally funded RSVP projects. This increase permanently increases the federal base funding for federal projects. In fiscal 2000, the total cost increase was \$1,660,245.

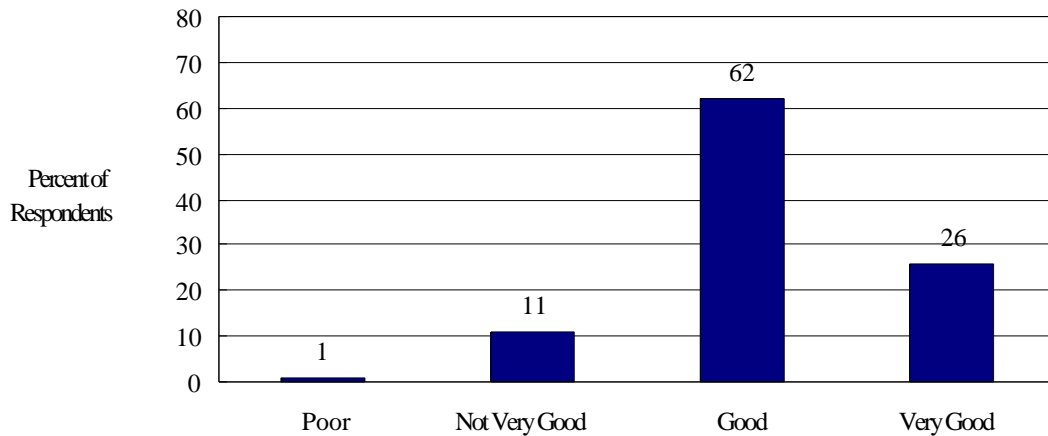
Customer Satisfaction

In 1999, the Corporation began a series of customer satisfaction surveys of all national service programs using an independent research firm (ORC Macro 2000). The researchers drew a random sample of 320 Retired and Senior Volunteer Program directors. In the telephone survey, 86 percent of the sample responded to questions focusing on three essential areas of interest: (1) importance and performance of various Corporation functions; (2) quality of service received from the Corporation; and (3) factors having the greatest influence on overall satisfaction. For all essential performance areas, a majority of respondents gave positive satisfaction ratings (See Figure 5-2).

¹³ This indicator tracks the progress of Programming for Impact in the national RSVP network. The "outcome-based assignment", as evidenced by a Programming for Impact statement on file with the volunteer station, or placement site, indicates the community need that the RSVP volunteers will help to meet through their service, including the anticipated accomplishments and, as applicable, the long-term impact of their service to meet the need.

Eighty-eight percent of the RSVP program directors rated the overall quality of service received in the past year from the Corporation as either “good” or “very good.” On a four-point scale (“poor” = 1 and “very good” = 4), the average rating of overall quality of service was 3.1.

Figure 5-2. Performance Measures: Customer Satisfaction
How RSVP Grantees Rate their Satisfaction with Corporation Services in 1999



Source: ORC Macro. 2000. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program*. Calverton, MD.

A detailed analysis of the results revealed that five factors had the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Corporation’s program performance related to RSVP:

- Providing policy guidance, interpretation, and clarification.
- Providing training and technical assistance.
- Providing feedback on project performance.
- Providing a national vision of senior service.
- Issuing grants in a timely manner.

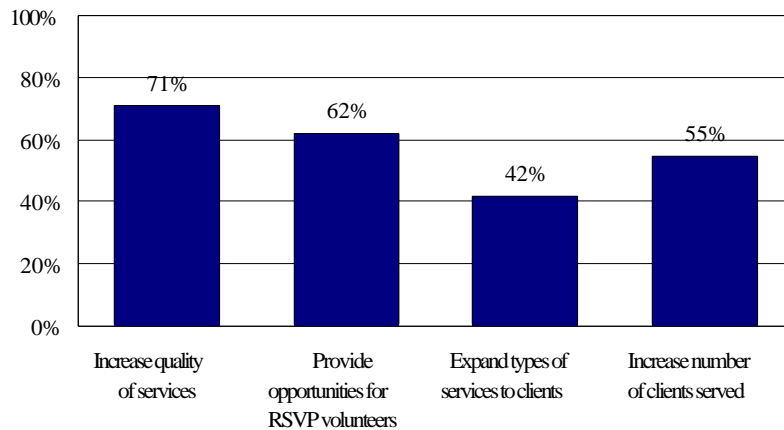
Further analyses of the data identified areas that the Corporation could focus on to improve customer satisfaction scores. RSVP would most likely increase the proportion of very satisfied customers by focusing on the quality of the feedback programs receive from Corporation State Offices on grant applications. Similarly, the program would most likely decrease the proportion of dissatisfied customers by improving the State Offices’ timeliness in producing reports for grantees (ORC Macro 2000).

Why Community Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for RSVP Volunteers

The 1999 RSVP Accomplishment Survey asked community agencies why they are willing to serve as placement sites, known as volunteer stations, for RSVP volunteers. As the percentages indicate, a desire to increase the quality of services that address community needs is the strongest reason, at 71 percent. The second highest response, at 62 percent, was to provide opportunities for RSVP volunteers to serve. These two responses from volunteer station supervisors reflect the

dual nature of the RSVP program: providing high quality services to the community, and a high quality volunteer experience to the older adults serving.

Figure 5-3. Why Community Service Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for RSVP Volunteers.



Source: Aguirre International. 2001. *Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Accomplishment Summary*. Survey data: July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

Table 5-2. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports
A Sample of Accomplishments from 2000¹⁴

Emphasis Area	Selected Accomplishments
Serving Children	<p>RSVP had 14,800 volunteers who spent 1,000,000 hours performing tutoring and supporting child literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutored 172,000 children in kindergarten through 12th grade. • Helped to establish, expand, or revitalize 1,000 literacy programs to benefit 46,000 children. <p>A total of 4,500 RSVP volunteers spent 258,000 hours in mentoring activities with children and youth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeled pro-social behaviors for 98,000 children and youth. • Provided constructive guidance and feedback to help 89,000 children and youth make productive choices. • Provided nurturing and support to 88,000 children and youth.

(Table continued on next page)

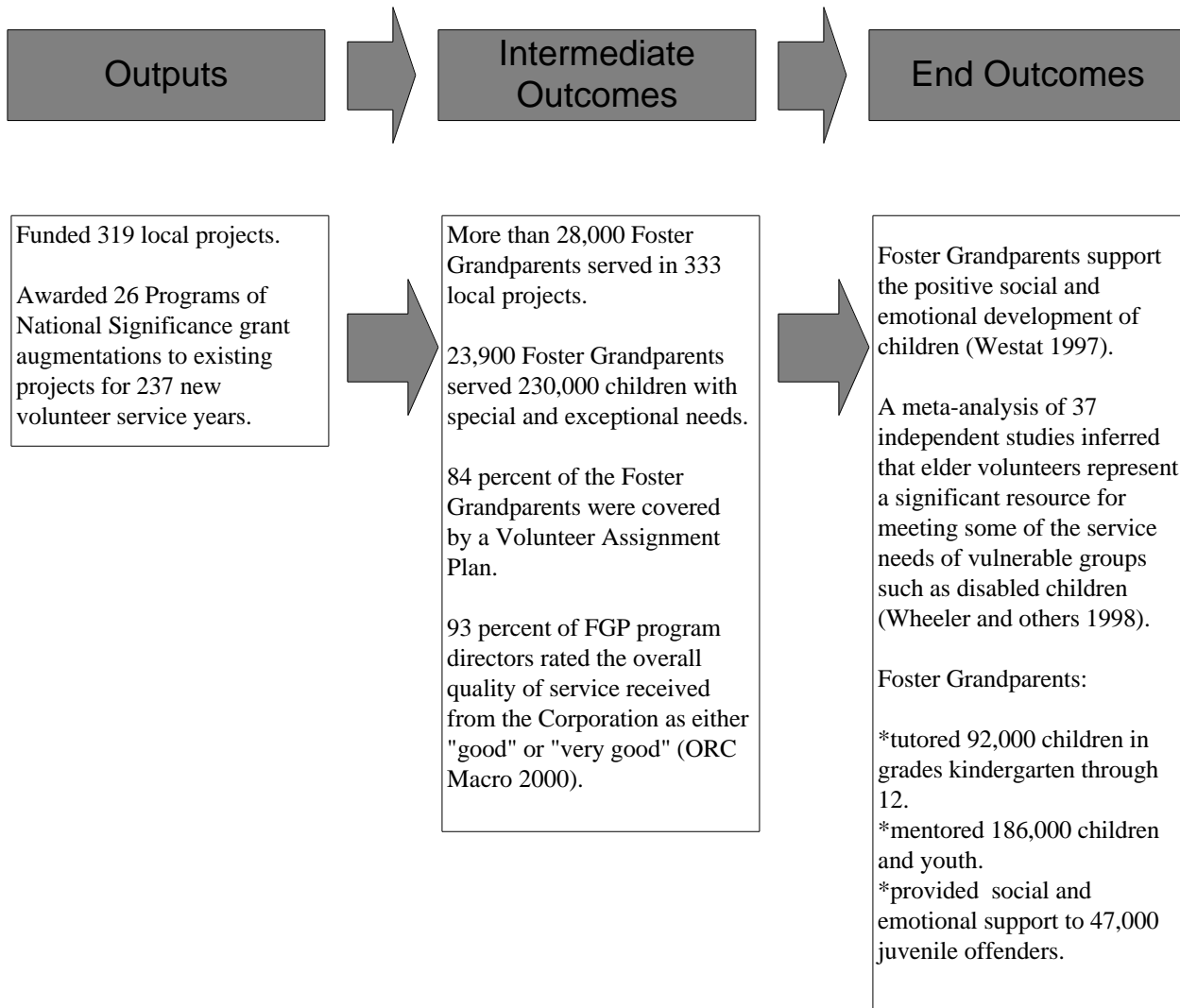
¹⁴ The data derived from the Corporation's accomplishment reporting system, are not subject to audit, and should be considered approximate indicators of level of performance. Results are rounded off and more precise estimates are available in the evaluation reports prepared by Aguirre International. Independent reviews conducted of the accomplishment reporting process in earlier years found that the reported results were accurate reflections of effort. In fact, programs were frequently found to underreport accomplishments.

Table 5-2. Performance Measures: Accomplishment ReportsA Sample of Accomplishments from 2000¹⁴

Emphasis Area	Selected Accomplishments
Delivering Health and Nutrition Services	<p>RSVP placed 70,000 volunteers in health and nutrition related assignments, with a total of 7,160,000 hours spent performing service activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided para-professional, nursing, physician, or other health services or dentistry to 79,700,000 people. • Assisted in providing immunizations to 242,000 adults. • Assisted in school immunization services benefiting 31,000 children. • Prepared and/or served food, cleaned up, planned menus for 50,236,000 meals at a group meal benefiting 18,267,000 people. • Gleaned, organized or packed food for a food bank, distributing 29,625,000 pounds of food benefiting 1,516,000 people.
Expanding Transportation Services	<p>RSVP had 8,800 volunteers who spent 1,392,000 hours in activities to expand transportation services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drove 8,230,000 miles, providing transportation for 131,000 people needing services for errands, doctor visits, and other reasons. • Helped to develop and operate 560 transportation systems used by 448,000 people.
Helping Disaster Preparedness and Relief Efforts	<p>RSVP placed 3,300 volunteers who spent 240,000 hours performing disaster preparedness and relief services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participated in response, relief, recovery, and mitigation activities during 9,000 emergencies, benefiting 2,340,000 individuals.
Management Consulting Services	<p>RSVP had 265 volunteers who spent 81,000 hours performing management consulting services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer executives provided assistance for 6,100 private, nonprofit or public agencies to expand and improve their operations benefiting 1,310,000 people.
Increasing Public Safety	<p>RSVP had 4,900 volunteers who spent 750,000 hours performing community policing and community patrols:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted 120,000 patrols, freeing up 540,000 hours of police time. • Served with 330 local police and community organizations to help ensure safer neighborhoods for 390,000 people. • Developed and participated in 200 neighborhood-watch programs benefiting 150,000 people.
Focusing on the Environment	<p>RSVP placed 1,250 volunteers who spent 190,000 hours performing recycling and other waste management activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created or staffed neighborhood recycling centers for 95 neighborhoods affecting 24,000 people. <p>A total of 1,100 volunteers spent 43,000 hours contributing to clean and safe water activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted and cleaned 60 beaches and streams. • Tested 670 wells, streams, and water tanks benefiting 900,000 people.

Source: Aguirre International. 1999. *Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Accomplishment Summary*.

FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM SUMMARY OF 2000 PERFORMANCE RESULTS



THE FOSTER GRANDPARENT PROGRAM (FGP)

Since 1965, Foster Grandparents have provided valuable aid to children and youth with exceptional needs. Foster Grandparents serve an average of 20 hours a week and receive stipends set at \$2.55 per hour. They must be age 60 or above and meet certain low-income requirements. In addition to the stipend, Foster Grandparents receive accident, liability, and automobile insurance coverage, if needed, during their assignments.

In fiscal 2000, more than 28,000 Foster Grandparents served in 333 local projects, including projects supported by non-federal funds. Foster Grandparents serve in schools, hospitals, drug treatment centers, correctional institutions, and Head Start and day care centers. They help abused and neglected children, mentor troubled teenagers and young mothers, and care for premature infants and children with physical disabilities. In 2000, 26 Programs of National Significance grant augmentations were awarded to existing projects for 237 new volunteer service years in locally identified service opportunities. Additionally, a total of \$1,812,445 was invested in permanent administrative increases for Corporation-funded projects.

Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) Performance in 2000

The Foster Grandparent Program met all of its Government Performance and Results Act indicator targets for 2000 (see Table 5-3). The program funded, through Corporation grants, 319 local projects and non-federal sources funded an additional 14 projects. Federally funded projects sponsored 23,143 Foster Grandparent service years, with 25,300 Foster Grandparents serving 230,000 children with special and exceptional needs. And, 84 percent of the Foster Grandparents were covered by a Volunteer Assignment Plan. These plans include a written description of the Foster Grandparent's assignment with a child and identify specific outcomes for the child served and the activities of the Foster Grandparent.

Foster Grandparent Contributions to Young Children

According to an independent program evaluation of Foster Grandparents placed in Head Start Centers (Westat 1997), Foster Grandparents support the positive social and emotional development of children. The study looked at the links between the Foster Grandparent activities and the outcomes for children. The final report showed how a series of caregiver behaviors from a standard caregiver scale (Arnett scale of positive behaviors) could be used to identify and measure Foster Grandparent interaction with children. Overall, the study found that Foster Grandparents demonstrated "positive caregiver behaviors that result in gains for children, classrooms, and Head Start centers." This finding and others from previous evaluations of FGP are listed in Table 5-4.

In Boston, Massachusetts, an increasingly diverse immigrant population has created a need in elementary schools for mentors who can work with students in their native language. Thirty-five Foster Grandparents with the Action for Boston Community Development Foster Grandparent project are lending a hand. The Foster Grandparents are from culturally diverse backgrounds. They are serving as surrogate grandparents and mentors to 110 children from countries such as China, Somalia, Russia, Trinidad, and Uzbekistan. The volunteers strive to create a familiar, comfortable environment in which the children can build self-esteem, and improve their English reading skills.

Table 5-3. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP), Fiscal 2000			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of federally funded FGP projects. Source: <i>Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps.</i>	309	319	YES
Number of federally funded FGP service years budgeted. Source: <i>Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps.</i>	23,100	23,143	YES
Number of children with special and exceptional needs served by Foster Grandparents. Source: <i>Project Profile and Volunteer Activity Survey.</i>	99,300 ¹⁵	230,000 (served annually)	YES
Percent of Foster Grandparents covered by a Volunteer Assignment Plan that includes a written description of a Foster Grandparent's assignment with a child and identifies specific outcomes for the child and the activities of the Foster Grandparent. Source <i>GPRA Status Report from grantee to Senior Corps headquarters.</i>	75% of all FGP volunteers nationwide	84 % of all FGP volunteers nationwide	YES

Why Community Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for Foster Grandparents

Community agencies offer several reasons why they serve as placement sites, known as volunteer stations, for Foster Grandparent volunteers. As seen in Figure 5-4, the predominant reason, at 88 percent, is a desire to increase the quality of services provided to the children and youth. The second highest response, at 66 percent, was to provide opportunities for Foster Grandparents to serve. These two responses from volunteer station supervisors reflect the dual nature of the Foster Grandparent program: providing high quality services to children, and a high quality volunteer experience to the older adults.

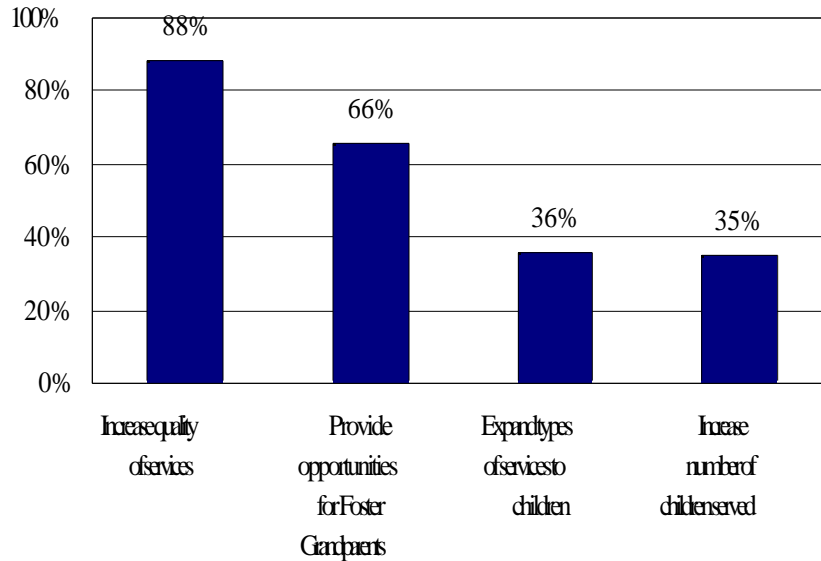
Customer Satisfaction

In 1999, the Corporation began a series of customer satisfaction surveys of all national service programs using an independent research firm (ORC Macro 2000). The researchers drew a random sample of 223 Foster Grandparent Program directors. In the telephone survey, 74 percent of the sample responded to questions focusing on three essential areas of interest: (1) importance and performance of various Corporation functions; (2) quality of service received from the Corporation; and (3) factors having the greatest influence on overall satisfaction. For all essential performance areas, a majority of respondents gave positive satisfaction ratings (see Figure 5-5).

Ninety-three percent of the FGP program directors rated the overall quality of service received in the past year from the Corporation as either “good” or “very good.” On a four-point scale (“poor” = 1 and “very good” = 4), the average rating of overall quality of service was 3.2.

¹⁵ The goal as set in the 2000 performance plan referred to the number of children expected to be seen daily. The Senior Corps based this goal on budget projections. The result was determined from the biannual *Project Profile and Volunteer Activities* reported filed by all Senior Corps grantees.

Figure 5-4. Reasons Why Community Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for Foster Grandparents.



Source: Aguirre International. 1999. *Foster Grandparent Program Accomplishment Survey*.

Table 5-4. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports
A Sample of Accomplishments from 2000¹⁶

Emphasis Area	Selected Service Accomplishments
Serving in elementary and secondary education, including tutoring and child literacy.	<p>6,700 Foster Grandparents spent 3,650,000 hours in tutoring and child literacy activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutored 92,000 students in grades K-12. • Served 27,000 students through one-to-one relationships in 7th through 12th grade. • Served 104,000 students through one-to-one relationships in kindergarten through 6th grades. • Provided supportive services to 188,000 children in Head Start centers, including child development and school readiness. • Contributed to a productive classroom environment, benefiting 72,000 children in Head Start centers.

(Table continued on next page)

¹⁶ The data derived from the Corporation's accomplishment reporting system are not subject to audit and should be considered approximate indicators of level of performance. Results are rounded off and more precise estimates are available in the evaluation reports prepared by Aguirre International. Independent reviews of the accomplishment reporting process in earlier years found that the reported results were accurate reflections of effort. In fact, programs were frequently found to underreport accomplishments.

Table 5-4. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports A Sample of Accomplishments from 2000 ¹⁶	
Emphasis Area	Selected Service Accomplishments
Mentoring children and youth.	5,200 Foster Grandparents spent 2,840,000 engaged in mentoring activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modeled pro-social behaviors, provided nurturing and support to 187,000 children and youth. Provided constructive guidance and feedback to help 156,000 children make productive choices.
Providing services to young offenders and ex-offenders.	840 Foster Grandparents spent 725,000 hours serving young offenders and ex-offenders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentored 15,000 young offenders/ex-offenders. Provided support and nurturing to 47,000 youth offenders/ex-offenders.
Supporting hospitalized children.	900 Foster Grandparents spent 640,000 hours assisting hospitalized children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nurtured 63,000 infants by feeding, cradling, singing, rocking. Visited with and nurtured 53,000 hospitalized children. Helped with preparation for and recovery from operations for 30,000 children.

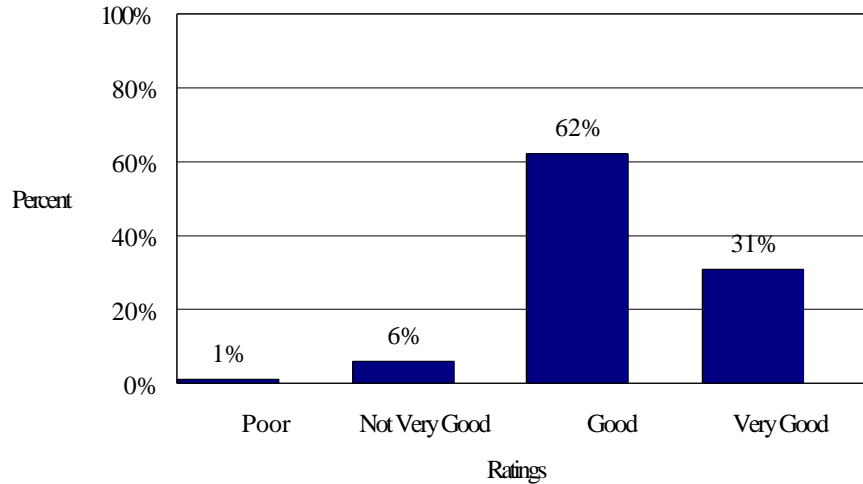
Source: Aguirre International. 2001. *Foster Grandparent Program Accomplishment Summary*. Survey data: July 1, 1999-June 30, 2000.

A detailed analysis of the results revealed that four factors had the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Corporation's program performance related to FGP:

- Providing consistent information.
- Providing training and technical assistance.
- Frequency of contact with Corporation State Office.
- Quality of service from the Corporation Service Center (the office responsible for issuing grants).

Further analyses of the data identified areas that the Corporation could focus on to improve customer satisfaction scores. The Foster Grandparent Program would most likely increase the proportion of very satisfied customers by focusing on the quality of the feedback programs receive on project performance. Similarly, the program would most likely decrease the proportion of dissatisfied customers by providing more information on issues, events, and other Senior Corps news.

Figure 5-5. How FGP Grantees Rated their Satisfaction with Corporation Services in 1999



Source: ORC Macro. 2000. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Foster Grandparent Program*. Calverton, MD.

Table 5-5. Performance Measures: End Outcomes Established by Independent Program Evaluation Studies		
Outcomes	Findings	Source
Developmental Improvements for Children	An impact study of FGP on Head Start concluded from intensive observations in six classrooms that “the majority of Foster Grandparents engage in a wide variety of activities and interactions that are associated with positive developmental outcomes for children . . .”	Westat 1997
Mentoring At-risk Youth	A study of two Foster Grandparent Programs and three other initiatives found the older adults particularly effective in serving as mentors to at-risk youth. The elders formed significant relationships with the young people, a mix of teenage mothers, youth in trouble with the juvenile justice system, and youth at risk of dropping out.	Freedman 1998
Resource for Disabled Children	A meta-analysis of 37 independent studies inferred that elder volunteers represent a significant resource for meeting some of the service needs of vulnerable groups such as disabled children.	Wheeler and others 1998

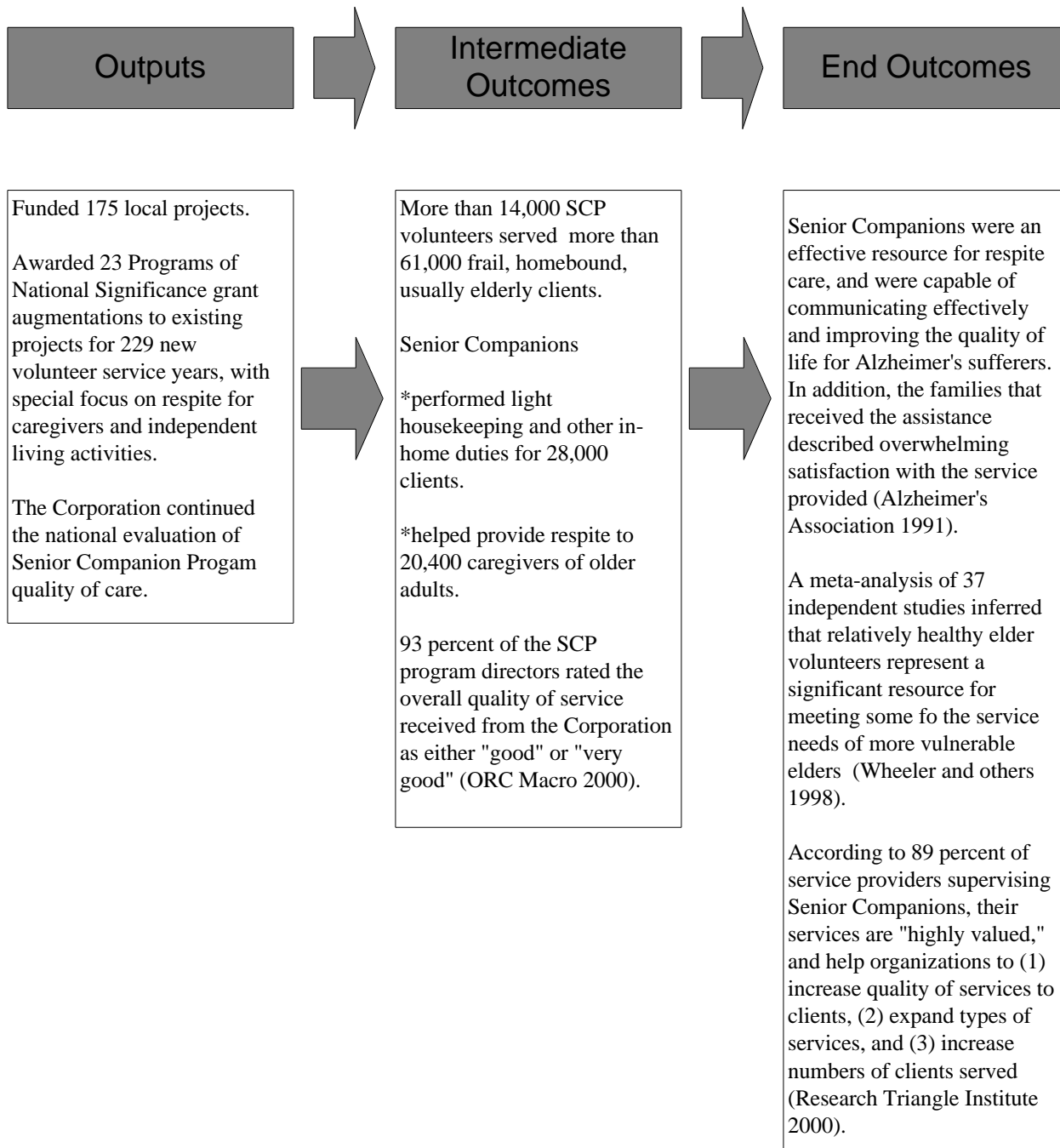
(Table continued on next page)

**Table 5-5. Performance Measures: End Outcomes
Established by Independent Program Evaluation Studies**

Outcomes	Findings	Source
Benefits for Foster Grandparents	A three-year study found that participants' mental health and social resources improved when compared to those on a waiting list who wanted to join the program but could not due to lack of program resources. The same study reported that 71 percent of the Foster Grandparents almost never felt lonely compared with 45 percent of the waiting list group. Eighty-three percent of participants reported being more satisfied with their life, compared with 52 percent of those waiting to join the program.	Litigation Support Services 1984

SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM

SUMMARY OF 2000 PERFORMANCE RESULTS



THE SENIOR COMPANION PROGRAM (SCP)

Senior Companions provide assistance to frail, homebound individuals, most of them elderly. These clients have difficulties with daily living tasks and Senior Companions help them retain their dignity and independence. The Senior Companion Program, like the Foster Grandparent Program, provides low-income persons, age 60 and over, the opportunity to serve those in need. Senior Companions receive the same stipend and insurance as Foster Grandparents and serve an average of 20 hours a week.

Senior Companions help homebound clients with chores such as paying bills, buying groceries, and finding transportation to medical appointments. They receive training in topics such as Alzheimer's disease, diabetes, and mental health. Moreover, Senior Companions alert doctors and family members of potential health problems. In 2000, 23 Programs of National Significance grants went to existing projects for 229 new volunteer service years. The Corporation also invested \$712,730 in permanent administrative increases for Corporation-funded Senior Companion projects.

Senior Companion Program Performance in 2000

The Senior Companion Program met three of its four annual performance goals for 2000 (see Table 5-6). The program funded 175 local projects.¹⁷ The number of service years budgeted was 9,194, with an actual total of 14,700 SCP volunteers serving 61,000 frail, homebound, usually elderly clients.¹⁸

The Corporation set an ambitious goal for the Senior Companion Program related to Programming for Impact. The fiscal 2000 goal called for 100 percent of Senior Companions serving to be covered by Volunteer Assignment Plans that include outcomes the clients served as well as the activities of the Senior Companion. In actuality, eighty-four percent of the SCP volunteers served in positions covered by Volunteer Assignment Plans.

Wilma and Margaret are two Senior Companions serving residents of two, rural, 30-unit HUD senior housing complexes. Wilma serves at Hill Manor in Hill City and Margaret at the Villa in McGregor.

Some of Wilma's clients are in their 90's and are still living independently in their apartments, due in part to Wilma's living on the premises and being readily available to them. Wilma makes sure her clients all have groceries and get to their appointments in Grand Rapids, the nearest town about 20 miles away, coordinating trips as necessary. Margaret sees many of the residents at the Villa, checking on them, taking them to the doctor, and encouraging them to get out every day for a balanced meal.

Margaret recently has been coordinating with a nearby school to get students to participate in projects and visit with the residents. Without Senior Companions like Wilma and Margaret, many of these residents would have to go to nursing homes.

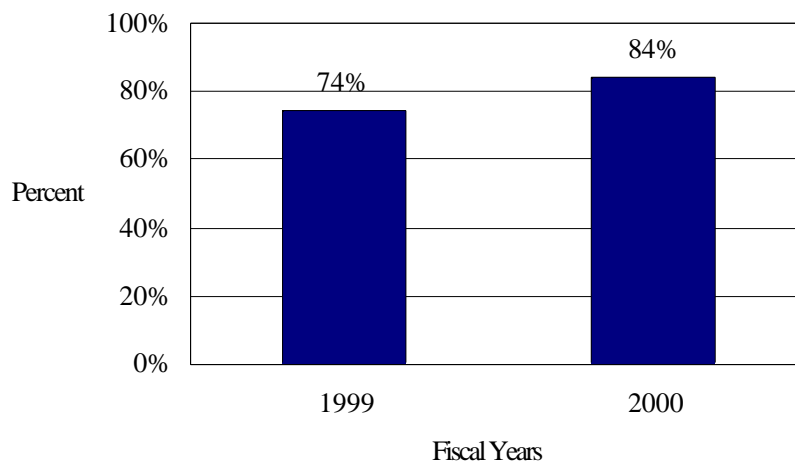
-- From Aitkin County, Minnesota, served by the Senior Companion Program of Minnesota, Statewide. Sponsored by Lutheran Services in America.

¹⁷ Indicator describes the number of local projects funded by the Corporation for National Service and does not include any projects funded from other sources.

¹⁸ Source: Corporation for National Service, National Senior Service Corps, *Project Profile and Volunteer Activity Survey*, 1999.

A review of Senior Companion Program progress toward meeting the Programming for Impact goal, currently set at 100 percent, reveals an upward trend. In 1999, the Programming for Impact indicator was set that 75 percent of Senior Companions nationwide would serve under Volunteer Assignment plans with the characteristics described above. The Senior Companion Program achieved 74 percent nationally in 1999. This year, although the program fell short of the 100 percent goal, actual achievement was at 84 percent, a 10 percent growth from 1999 (see Figure 5-6).

Figure 5-6. Senior Companions with Volunteer Assignment Plans, 1999-2000



Source: National Senior Service Corps. Corporation for National Service.

The Corporation will evaluate this indicator in the coming year and may make a determination to adjust the percentage to reach 100 percent over a longer period.

Accomplishment Highlights

Approximately 27 local Senior Companion projects in 13 states are part of their community's Medicaid-supported service network, delivering home health care services as part of the community-based Medicaid Waiver plans. Each state's Medicaid lead agency approves these plans and identifies services and reimbursements for each approved partner.

Medicaid waiver partnerships are a growing area of opportunity for Senior Companion projects. They result in better integration of senior service into core, independent-living, delivery networks, and they improve access to Medicaid Waiver funds that can be used to recruit and place Senior Companion volunteers above the numbers supported by their base federal or state funds. Table 5-7 lists the states in which Senior Companion services under Medicaid waiver partnerships were delivered in 2000. With total funding of \$1,898,571, 523 Senior Companions provided services through Medicaid waiver partnerships. They reached approximately 1,400 clients.

Table 5-6. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for the Senior Companion Program (SCP), Fiscal 2000

Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of federally funded Senior Companion projects. Source: <i>Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps.</i>	162	175	YES
No. of federally funded SCP service years budgeted. Source: <i>Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps.</i>	9,100	9,194	YES
Number of frail, homebound, usually elderly clients served by Senior Companions. Source: <i>Project Profile and Volunteer Activity Survey.</i>	54,900	61,000	YES
Percent of Senior Companions covered by Volunteer Assignment Plans that include a written description of a Senior Companion's assignment with a client, and identifies specific outcomes for the client served and the activities of the Senior Companion. Source: <i>GPRA Status Report from grantee to Senior Corps headquarters</i>	100% of all SCP volunteers nationwide	84% of all SCP volunteers nationwide	NO

Table 5-7: States with Senior Companions Serving under Medicaid Waiver Partnerships

California	New York
Florida	Pennsylvania
Iowa	Rhode Island
Michigan	South Carolina
Minnesota	Utah
Nevada	Wisconsin
New Jersey	

Source: Corporation for National Service, *State Accomplishment Reports 2000: Demonstrating Accomplishments.*

National Evaluation Underway

In 1998, the Corporation began the first phase of a new national evaluation, the Senior Companion Program Quality of Care Evaluation. This three-year study will provide new information about the degree to which Senior Companions help clients live independently, while maintaining active involvement with family and community. The study will also investigate the role of SCP volunteers in helping clients receive and eat balanced meals. And, the research will investigate the importance of SCP services in reducing stress for other caregivers.

During 2000, *The Role and Value of Senior Companions in Their Communities*, the first report from this national evaluation, was released (Research Triangle Institute 2000). The report explores the extent to which Senior Companion services are valued by service providers. Supervisors of organizations serving as placement sites, called volunteer stations, were surveyed.

Key findings include:

- Senior Companions provide valuable services to the volunteer stations.
 - Eighty-nine percent of volunteer station supervisors placed a high value on the Senior Companions and their services, describing them as “very valuable.”
 - Volunteer stations were able to serve additional clients and provided additional services to present clients.
 - Senior Companions made it possible to serve two new groups of clients: those with special needs and those not eligible for subsidized services who could not afford to pay for services.
- Senior Companions provide valuable services to clients and family members who serve as the clients’ full-time caregivers.
 - Client services included companionship, help with independent living, and regular visits that allowed continuous monitoring of clients’ health and well-being.
 - 79 percent of volunteer station representatives reported that family members were better able to work as a result of the Senior Companions’ services.
- Senior Companions realize certain intangible benefits from the services they provide to their clients, including feeling a greater sense of purpose.

Table 5-8. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports	
A Sample of Accomplishments from 2000 ¹⁹	
Emphasis Areas	Selected Service Accomplishments
Expanding availability of in-home care resources for adults in need of extra assistance.	<p>7,100 Senior Companions spent 4,004,000 hours performing activities in support of in-home care for their clients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided light housekeeping, meal preparation, and nutritional information to 28,000 frail adults • Provided support for limited health and maintenance activities such as bathing, dressing, grooming to 19,000 adults. • Allowed organizations to deliver services more efficiently by freeing up professional/para-professional caregivers to expand in-home care services to 12,000 additional frail adults. • Allowed organizations to offer new in-home services to 7,000 frail adults.

(Table continued on next page)

--	--

¹⁹ The data derived from the Corporation’s accomplishment reporting system are not subject to audit and should be considered approximate indicators of level of performance. Results are rounded off and more precise estimates are available in the evaluation reports prepared by Aguirre International. Independent reviews of the accomplishment reporting process in earlier years found that the reported results were accurate reflections of effort. In fact, programs were frequently found to underreport accomplishments.

Table 5-8. Performance Measures: Accomplishment Reports A Sample of Accomplishments from 2000 ¹⁹	
Emphasis Areas	Selected Service Accomplishments
Serving as eyes and ears and “early warning systems” for case-management professionals.	3,100 Senior Companions served as “eyes and ears” to identify potential problems or needed services for case management professional with 23,800 frail adults.
Providing companionship to isolated frail adults.	9,400 Senior Companions served 5,200,000 hours performing companionship duties: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaged in friendly visiting, reassurance, and companionship services to 68,500 frail adults. Participated in activities such as letter-writing, reading, talking to 69,000 frail adults to ease loneliness.
Offering respite to caregivers of frail adults.	3,600 Senior Companions spent 1,870,000 hours providing respite to 20,400 caregivers of frail adults.
Helping clients find resources and services.	1,430 Senior Companions helped to identify 9,000 community support resources for 16,500 adult clients.
Enhancing safety and preventing accidents.	840 Senior Companions spent 92,000 hours identifying and reporting 2,200 safety problems affecting 2,100 frail adults, in areas such as home safety, fire prevention, auto safety, traffic/pedestrian control.

Source: Aguirre International. 1999. *Senior Companion Program Accomplishment Summary*.

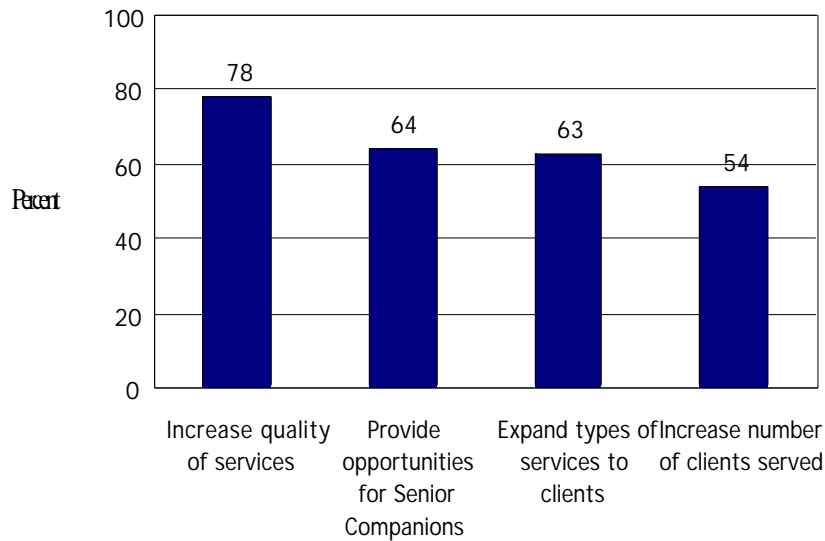
Why Community Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for Senior Companions

Community agencies offer several key reasons why they serve as placement sites, known as volunteer stations, for Senior Companion volunteers (see Figure 5-7). As the percentages demonstrate, a desire to increase the quality of services provided to the adult clients is the predominant reason, at 78 percent. The second highest response, at 64 percent, was to provide opportunities for Senior Companions to serve. This was just above the 63 percent who cited expanding types of services to clients as their reason for participating. These two responses from volunteer station supervisors reflect the dual nature of the Senior Companion program: providing high quality services to adult clients, and a high quality, volunteer experience to the older adults serving.

Customer Satisfaction

In 1999, the Corporation began a series of customer satisfaction surveys of all national service programs using an independent research firm (ORC Macro 2000). The researchers drew a random sample of 172 Senior Companion Program directors. In the telephone survey, 74 percent of the sample responded to questions focusing on three essential areas of interest: (1) importance and performance of various Corporation functions; (2) quality of service received from the Corporation; and (3) factors having the greatest influence on overall satisfaction. For all essential performance areas, a majority of respondents gave positive satisfaction ratings (See Figure 5-8).

Figure 5-7. Why Community Service Agencies Serve as Placement Sites for Senior Companions



Source: Aguirre International. 2001. *Senior Companion Program Accomplishment Summary*. Survey data: July 1, 1999-June 30, 2000.

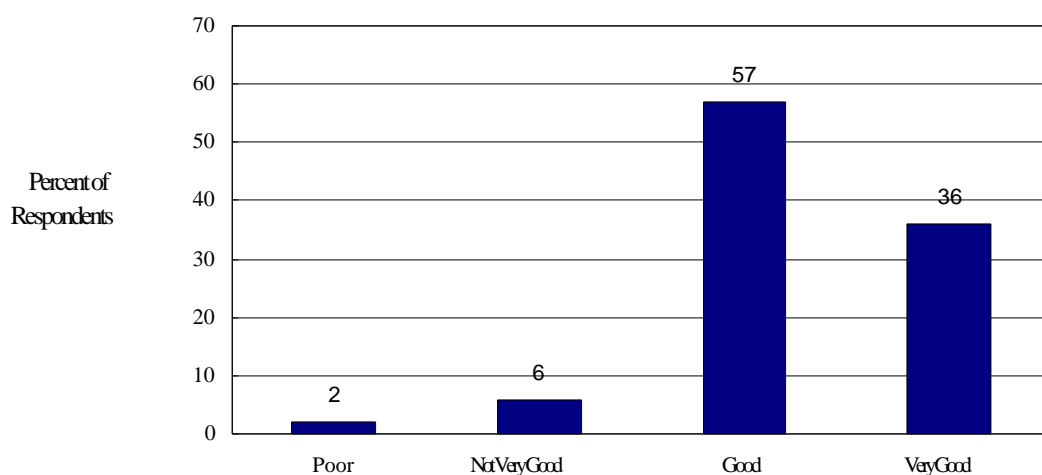
Ninety-three percent of the SCP program directors rated the overall quality of service received in the past year from the Corporation as either “good” or “very good.” On a four-point scale (“poor” = 1 and “very good” = 4), the average rating of overall quality of service was 3.3.

A detailed analysis of the results revealed that three factors had the greatest impact on overall satisfaction with the Corporation’s SCP program performance:

- Quality of service from the Corporation State Office.
- Sensitivity to local needs and conditions.
- Quality of service from the Corporation’s area manager (the office responsible for coordinating the activities of a cluster of State Offices).

Further analyses of the data identified areas that the Corporation could focus on to improve customer satisfaction scores. The Senior Companion Program would most likely increase the proportion of very satisfied customers by providing more technical assistance and information from headquarters. Similarly, the program would most likely decrease the proportion of dissatisfied customers by improving the state offices’ timeliness in producing reports for grantees (ORC Macro 2000).

Figure 5-8. Performance Measures: Customer Satisfaction
How SCP Grantees Rate Their Satisfaction with Corporation Services in 1999



Source: ORC Macro. 2000. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Senior Companion Program*. Calverton, MD.

Table 5-9. Performance Measures: End Outcomes Established by Independent Program Evaluation Studies

Outcomes	Findings	Source
Benefits to agencies serving frail adults and respite for caregivers.	A three-year evaluation to examine the impact of the Senior Companion Program on agencies, clients, and families/caregivers. The first year report noted that 89 percent of the service providers described Senior Companion services as "highly valuable."	Research Triangle Institute 2000
Resource for Disabled Children.	A meta-analysis of 37 independent studies inferred that relatively healthy elder volunteers represent a significant resource for meeting some of the service needs of more vulnerable elders.	Wheeler and others 1998
Support for Alzheimer's Sufferers.	In 1991, the Alzheimer's Association studied a demonstration program bringing together Senior Companions and Alzheimer's sufferers, concluding that the seniors were "an effective resource for respite care," and were capable of communicating effectively with clients and improving their quality of life. In addition, the families that received the assistance described "overwhelming satisfaction" with the service provided.	Alzheimer's Association 1991

SENIOR DEMONSTRATIONS

The Senior Corps Demonstration initiatives test new models and emerging effective practices for involving older people in volunteer service. Senior Demonstrations build on effective practices and lessons learned from current Senior Corps programs as well as other national service activities. The goal is to find the best way to tap the vast civic potential of the coming baby boom generation - the largest, best educated, healthiest, wealthiest, longest-living generation of seniors in the nation's history. Four Senior Demonstrations were underway in 2000: Seniors for Schools, Seniors for Habitat, the Experience Corps for Independent Living, and Senior Leaders.

Seniors for Schools National Demonstration: Focused On Child Literacy

Seniors for Schools was launched in 1997 to focus the resources and talents of older volunteers helping to ensure that children in need of extra literacy assistance could read independently by the end of the third grade. A total of nine Seniors for Schools sites operate around the nation, in Florida, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Senior volunteers are recruited, trained, and placed in elementary schools to provide literacy services, including tutoring in reading, to students in primary grades.

Seniors for Schools 2000 Performance Results

Seniors for Schools met all of its annual performance indicator goals for 2000 (see Table 5-10). Seniors for Schools placed 332 intensive service (15 hours a week or more) volunteers in child literacy activities. An additional 183 volunteers served in less intensive placements, for a national total of 515 volunteers. Altogether, these volunteers served 5,360 children, providing tutoring, outreach for parental involvement, and other literacy-related activities.

Table 5-10. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators For Senior Demonstration Program (SDP), Fiscal 2000			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Seniors for Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of intensive service (15 hours a week or more) Seniors for Schools volunteers in targeted America Reads placements. Source: <i>Quarterly Progress Reports from Grantees</i>.	300	332	YES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of children served by Seniors for Schools volunteers through literacy-focused placements. Source: <i>Quarterly Progress Reports from Grantees</i>.	4,000	5,360	YES

Outcomes of the Seniors for Schools Initiative

Students targeted for tutoring by Seniors for Schools volunteers were among the lowest achievers in their respective schools. Many improved a full grade-level or more and demonstrated an increase in reading confidence. This finding indicates a profound benefit to the children, who, in numerous schools, consistently showed positive outcomes as measured by a variety of standardized and non-standardized instruments. In several demonstrable ways, Seniors for Schools

affected children's reading ability and increased schools' instructional resources (See Table 5-11).

Table 5-11. Performance Measures: End Outcomes Established by Independent Program Evaluation Studies		
Outcomes	Findings	Source
Impact on Children.	92% of students measured showed improved reading skills during the project year. 85% of teachers surveyed observed positive changes in student reading ability. Over 81% of principals and teachers surveyed indicated that students displayed increased positive attitude toward reading, increased confidence in reading ability, and self-esteem.	Project Star 2000
Impact on Schools.	94% of principals, staff, and teachers surveyed want to continue to have Seniors for Schools volunteers present in their schools next year; 100% of principals and 91% of teachers surveyed noted that Seniors serve as positive adult role models and that children's respect for older adults increased.	

Seniors for Habitat

Seniors for Habitat is a pilot program involving the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and selected Habitat for Humanity International affiliates. In 1999 and 2000, eight RSVP projects were funded to use the time, talent, experience, and resources of older adults in helping build the capacity of Habitat affiliates. These affiliates seek to move people out of substandard housing and into their own homes. In fiscal 2000, more than 185 Seniors for Habitat volunteers worked to complete construction projects and helped cut the completion time in half.

Experience Corps for Independent Living

In 1998, the Corporation launched the Experience Corps for Independent Living to test innovative ways to use the experience, time, and talents of older volunteers to expand the supply of independent living services for frail elders and their families/caregivers. The project is operating in six communities: Phoenix, AZ; Sacramento, CA; Palm Beach Gardens, FL; Baltimore, MD; Minneapolis, MN; and Salt Lake City, UT. No additional funding was made available for the Experience Corps for Independent Living projects in 2000, but projects were authorized to continue activities using remaining fiscal 1999 funds.

The community outcomes include: increasing numbers of older persons who receive independent living services; increased numbers of caregivers who receive respite services; improved efficiency among professional providers as a result of being freed from performing certain tasks; services to older persons and their caregivers not previously offered; and increased numbers of volunteers supporting and supplementing the independent living services delivered by professionals and para-professionals.

The core elements identified in the original Experience Corps were incorporated into this demonstration initiative. These elements, which were found to create optimal conditions for both "Get-

ting Things Done” and providing a high quality experience for senior volunteers, are: focused activity; critical mass of volunteers in each site; service options for volunteers, including direct and indirect roles for volunteers and opportunities for intensive service and less intensive service; leadership opportunities for volunteers; team and corps concept; diversity among volunteers with respect to backgrounds, ethnicity and income; and incentives, including monetary incentives for volunteers who provide intensive service of 15 or more hours a week.

As of September 2000, the Experience Corps for Independent Living had a total enrollment of 198 senior volunteers. These volunteers helped to expand independent living services to a reported 5,802 clients in need of additional assistance.²⁰

Senior Leaders

The Senior Leaders model focused on sustained, intensive service (15 or more hours of service a week) of senior leaders in the three Senior Corps programs – RSVP, FGP, and SCP. The senior leaders helped to recruit and support even greater numbers of volunteers age 55 and older. Additionally, the volunteers could serve without regard to income or other restrictions on the types of activities they could undertake.

During 1998 and 1999, more than 125 Senior Corps projects incorporated senior leaders into their volunteer ranks, resulting in 285 senior leaders nationally. Ninety-two RSVP projects recruited and placed 165 senior leaders nationwide. Twenty-one FGP projects placed 68 senior leaders. Twelve SCP projects placed 51 senior leaders.

One important goal of the senior leader initiative was to attract older adults who are not age- or income-eligible for SCP or FGP. End-of-year data indicated that Senior Leader design features did attract and engage volunteers meeting these characteristics. Of the 69 FGP senior leaders serving nationwide in 1999, 23 (or 33 percent) were younger than the required minimum age of 60 years for eligibility in the program. Of the 51 SCP senior leaders serving nationwide in 1999, 15 (or 30 percent) were younger than the required minimum age of 60 years for eligibility in the program.

Senior Leaders performed a range of tasks and critical functions. Leaders helped to streamline project operations, increased project efficiency and productivity, and improved the quality of services. They served as liaison to volunteer stations and the community. Leaders recruited and mentored other volunteers. Leaders coordinated service projects, helped with publicity, located community resources, and did need assessments as part of project planning.

In fiscal 2000, the Congress directed that the Corporation could not use fiscal 2000 Senior Demonstration funds to provide payment of non-taxable, non-income stipends to individuals not meeting income requirements under the Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion programs (Pub. L. 106-113), except to bring closure to the Seniors for Schools project. Congress further directed that all demonstration activity be funded under Part E, Senior Demonstration Programs. Age- and income-eligible senior leaders were allowed to continue with SCP authority and funding. Senior leaders in RSVP were continued in fiscal 2000 under Part E authority and funding.

²⁰ Source: Research Triangle Institute, *The Second Year of the Experience Corps for Independent Living Demonstration Evaluation*, 2001.

References

- Aguirre International. 2001a. *Foster Grandparent Program Accomplishment Summary*. Survey data: July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.
- Aguirre International. 2001b. *Retired and Senior Volunteer Program Accomplishment Summary*. Survey data: July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.
- Aguirre International. 2001c. *Senior Companion Program Accomplishment Summary*. Survey data: July 1, 1999 – June 31, 2000.
- Alzheimer's Association, "Alzheimer Care Demonstration Evaluation Report," 1991, cited in *Seniors in National and Community Service: A Report Prepared for The Commonwealth Fund's Americans Over 55 At Work Program*, by Marc Freedman, 1994.
- Freedman, M. 1988. *Partners in Growth: Elder Mentors and At-Risk Youth*. Public/Private Ventures. Philadelphia, PA.
- Litigation Support Services. 1984. *Impact Evaluation of the Foster Grandparent Program on the Foster Grandparents*.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Senior Companion Program*. Calverton, MD.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Foster Grandparent Program*. Calverton, MD.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program*. Calverton, MD.
- ORC Macro. 2000. *1999 Direct Customer Satisfaction Surveys. Highlighted Findings*. An oral briefing on December 19, 2000 to Corporation for National Service Staff Calverton, MD.
- Project STAR. 2000. *Seniors for Schools Year 2 Evaluation Report: 1998-1999 School Year*. San Mateo, CA.
- Research Triangle Institute, 2000. *The Role and Value of Senior Companions in Their Communities*. Research Triangle Park, NC.
- Research Triangle Institute, 2001. *The Second Year of the Experience Corps for Independent Living Demonstration Evaluation*, Research Triangle Park, NC.
- Sociometrics, Inc. 1988. *An Evaluation of Family Caregiver Services*.
- Westat, Inc. 1997. *Foster Grandparent Evaluation Final Report, Foster Grandparents and Children in Head Start*. Rockville, MD.
- Westat, Inc. 1997. *The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program: Summary Evaluation Report*. Rockville, MD.
- Wheeler, J.A., K. M. Gorey, and B. Greenblatt. 1998. "The Beneficial Effects of Volunteering for Older Volunteers and the People They Serve: A Meta-Analysis." *International Journal of Aging and Human Development* 47.

PART II: SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Chapter 6. National Service Trust

Chapter 7. Evaluation

Chapter 8. Innovation, Demonstration, and Assistance

Chapter 9. Program Administration

CHAPTER 6. NATIONAL SERVICE TRUST

The National Service Trust provides a secure repository for education awards earned by eligible participants who successfully complete a term of service in one of the three branches of AmeriCorps: AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*NCCC, and AmeriCorps*VISTA. In this program, the Corporation awards scholarships to high school students who perform outstanding community service. Funds are appropriated in the Operating Expenses account and are transferred into the Trust, an account in the U.S. Treasury. In addition to appropriated amounts, the Trust consists of interest on and proceeds from the sale or redemption of any obligations held by the Trust.

Under the Trust Act, funds are available to:

- repay qualified student loans;
- pay all or part of the cost of attendance at an institution of higher education;
- pay expenses incurred in participating in an approved school-to-work program; and
- repay eligible interest expense.

In addition, for the past several years, special legislative language has permitted the Corporation to use funds from the Trust for the President's Student Service Scholarship Program.

The value of an education award depends on the length of service performed by an AmeriCorps member. Completion of a full time term of service, currently requiring a minimum of 1,700 hours of service, entitles an AmeriCorps member to an education award of \$4,725. Education awards earned by AmeriCorps members are available to be used for seven years from the end of the service. Payments from the Trust are made directly to the education institutions and the loan holders as directed by the members and by the institutions.

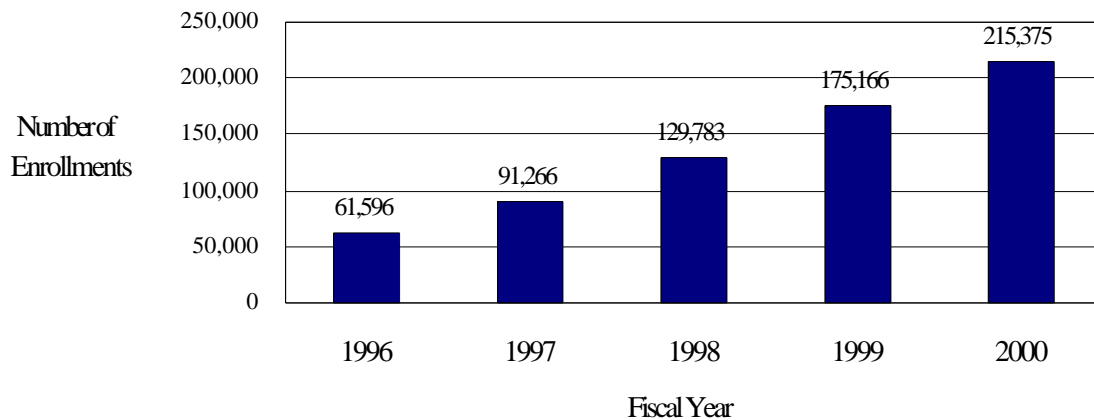
Generally, AmeriCorps grants are not awarded until late in the year in which the funds are appropriated or early in the subsequent year (the NCSA appropriation is available for two fiscal years). Thus, most AmeriCorps members begin their service in the fiscal year after the funds are appropriated. With the staggered starting times of projects and part-time service being provided over a several year period, most of the service by members is not completed until late in the subsequent year or the year following.

Trust Enrollment Activity

Since the Corporation's inception in 1994, through fiscal 2000, over 215 thousand enrollments were recorded in the Trust and over 134 thousand enrollees earned an education benefit. Many of these enrollees are still serving. Of those earning an award, nearly 70 thousand have used some or all of their award, totaling over \$218 million as of fiscal 2000 year-end. Another \$9.5 million in interest forbearance payments have been made and \$5.3 million has been used for awards under the President's Student Service Scholarship Program.

Annual enrollments were about 25,000 for the program's first three years and then jumped to about 40,000 in program year 1997-1998, a 60 percent increase. Since that time enrollments have

Figure 6-1. Cumulative Trust Enrollments through Fiscal 2000



Source: National Service Trust Database, Corporation for National Service.

remained at about 40,000 per program year. According to the latest available data, the Trust enrolled 40,334 AmeriCorps members in program year 1999-2000. This is less than the enrollment goal of 47,000 members in the Trust for the program year. The difference reflects three issues. First, some enrollments for program year 1999-2000 projects are still occurring, as some projects, primarily in the Education Award Program, have an extended period in which to enroll members. Second, enrollment estimates are projections reflecting assumptions about the activities and operations of thousands of non-profit organizations in communities across the country, and thus, actual results can vary. Third, there is evidence that some local programs, particularly those targeted at specific populations, experienced recruitment challenges in light of the strong economy.

Table 6-1. Enrollments in the Trust by Program Year (As of September 30, 2000)	
Program Year	Enrollments
1994-1995	25,121
1995-1996	25,190
1996-1997	25,209
1997-1998	39,756
1998-1999	40,628
1999-2000	40,334
2000-2001 ²¹	19,101
Total	215,339

Source: National Service Trust Database, Corporation for National Service.

²¹ Because of the staggered starting times of projects and part-time service being provided over a several year period, data are incomplete.

Table 6-3. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators²²			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of AmeriCorps members enrolling in the Trust. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> .	47,000	40,916	NO
Percent of AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service and become eligible to receive an education award. Source: <i>National Service Trust Database</i> . ²³	75%	76.3%	YES

Since its inception through fiscal 2000, the total federal funds appropriated to the Trust have reached \$538 million. The interest earned from investing the Trust funds totals \$110 million (see Table 6-4). During this period the Corporation has made payments from the Trust totaling \$233 million. In addition, in the fiscal 2000 appropriation, Congress rescinded \$80 million of the amounts previously appropriated to the National Service Trust.

Table 6-4. National Service Trust Federal Appropriations and Interest Earned, 1994-2000		
Fiscal Year	Appropriation	Interest
1994	\$ 98,751,000	\$ 3,071,000
1995	115,070,000	11,752,000
1996	56,000,000	13,015,000
1997	59,000,000	15,790,000
1998	70,000,000	21,381,000
1999	70,000,000	23,666,000
2000	69,000,000	21,514,000
Total²⁴	537,821,000	\$110,190,000

Sources: (1) VA/HUD appropriation bills, 1994-2000; (2) National Service Trust subsidiary ledger. Corporation for National Service.

The total number of education awards earned from all program years since 1994-1995 reached 134,740 as of the end of fiscal 2000. The total dollar value of those awards was \$483 million (See Table 6-5). The difference between the number of members who enroll and the number who earn education awards is a combination of those who leave the program without earning an edu-

²²One annual performance indicator, formerly listed under the Trust, concerning the number of Presidential Student Service Scholarships now is listed under Learn and Serve America. Trust appropriations fund the program, but the Department of Service-Learning administers it.

²³This year's calculation differs from that used in the fiscal 1999 report. The decision was made this year to exclude individuals enrolled in the Trust who were terminated with no service hours completed. During fiscal 2000, a concerted effort was made to close out the records of programs no longer in operation. Many members, who had been on the rolls for several years, long after their programs went out of business, were given a termination date in fiscal 2000. This was a useful accounting decision, but it did not take into account its effect on completion rates, which was to artificially deflate the completion rates by increasing the number of terminations with no education award.

²⁴Does not reflect fiscal 2000 rescission of \$80 million of amounts previously appropriated to the Trust.

cation award and those who are still serving in a program. As there are still many people serving from program year 1999-2000 and some from program year 1998-1999 (several programs had late start dates, and part-time service can be performed over several years), these data will change in subsequent reports.

Table 6-5. Number of Education Awards Earned and Their Value by Program Year (as of September 30, 2000)		
Program Year	Number who earned award	Value of awards
1994-1995	18,788	\$ 62,759,226
1995-1996	18,416	71,441,986
1996-1997	18,209	71,224,552
1997-1998 (incomplete data)	26,881	97,090,529
1998-1999 (incomplete data)	26,905	96,662,143
1999-2000 (incomplete data)	23,537	80,342,986
2000-2001 (incomplete data)	2,004	3,761,328
Total	134,740	\$483,282,751

Source: National Service Trust Database. Corporation for National Service.

Earning and Using the Education Awards

AmeriCorps members earn the education award when they have successfully completed a term of service (except for those members of AmeriCorps*VISTA who choose to earn the cash stipend). Across all three branches of AmeriCorps – State and National, VISTA, and NCCC – 76.3 percent of the members completing a term of service in fiscal 2000 earned the education award.²⁵

The Corporation aspired to a goal of 75 percent for member completions in fiscal 2000 and achieved 76.3 percent. AmeriCorps*NCCC recorded 83.8 percent and AmeriCorps*VISTA 82.5 percent. AmeriCorps*State and National came in with 75.4 percent and, because of their size relative to the other programs, brought the overall rate down. Within AmeriCorps*State and National, the National Direct grantees achieved a completion rate of 79.5 percent and State grantees 69.8 percent. The completion rate in the Education Award Program was 87.8 percent. In these programs, the Corporation funds the Education Award and provides only a fraction of the administrative support given to other types of AmeriCorps programs.

Education awards can be used in three ways. First, the award can repay qualified (generally, Federally guaranteed) student loans. Second, the award can pay all or part of the cost of attending a qualified institution of higher education (a school which has a program-participation agreement with the Department of Education under the provisions of the Higher Education Act). And three, the award can pay for expenses incurred while participating in an approved school-to-

²⁵ This completion rate does not include any AmeriCorps*VISTA members successfully completing service and choosing the cash stipend option.

work program. Through fiscal 2000, 57 percent of the award money was used to finance continuing education, 32 percent to pay student loans, and 11 percent was used to do both.

In addition to being able to earn an education award, individuals participating in AmeriCorps are entitled to have most of their qualified student loans placed in forbearance during their period of service. Forbearance permits the loan recipient to suspend payments during the term of service. If the individual successfully completes the term of service, the National Service Trust will pay the interest that accrued on the student loans while the member was in service.

An education award is generally available for use by the member who earned it for seven years from the end of the member's service. The dollar amount of the education award that has been used through the end of program year 1999-2000 totals over \$218 million (as of 9/30/00). Interest forbearance payments made for members total \$9.5 million (see Table 6-6).

The pattern of use by AmeriCorps members has been very consistent. People who earned an education award for service in the first year of the program have used about 75 percent of the education award funds held in trust for them (as of September 30, 2000). This usage rate is up from 63 percent at the end of fiscal 1999. Most of those awards will be available until sometime in fiscal year 2002.

Table 6-6. Amount of Education Awards Used by Members and Interest Forbearance Paid by Program Year (as of September 30, 2000)		
Program Year of Service	Education Award Used	Interest Forbearance Paid
1994-1995	\$ 41,476,226	\$ 473,770
1995-1996	45,255,579	961,317
1996-1997	42,125,212	1,719,590
1997-1998	50,035,044	2,956,059
1998-1999	33,707,652	2,505,007
1999-2000	5,538,122	854,422
2000-2001 ²⁶	59,530	2,763
Total	\$218,197,365	\$9,472,928

Source: 2000 Financial Statement. Corporation for National Service.

Management of the National Service Trust

The Corporation made a number of changes in the operation of the National Service Trust in fiscal 2000 to improve the quality of its records and the service it provides AmeriCorps members. It engaged a new firm for improved maintenance of the imaging system, and implemented several measures to improve the timeliness of payments. Also, the Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS), which lets all programs entered enrollment data through the Internet, is undergoing continual revision and refinement. Finally, the Corporation phased in a reconciliation process that facilitates the comparison of information in the AmeriCorps program and Trust databases and the resolution of differences.

²⁶ Ibid.

CHAPTER 7. EVALUATION

The program evaluation activities of the Corporation employ the methods of social science research to assess the design, implementation, and effects of national service programs. One goal of evaluation in the Corporation is to provide decision-makers at all levels of national service with information that can improve national service programs. Another goal is to determine the extent to which national service programs produce measurable outcomes and, to the extent that they do not, to determine why not.

The Corporation initiates 20-30 studies each year using independent, evaluation research contractors. Past and present contractors include the following:

- *Abt Associates*, Cambridge, Massachusetts
- *Aguirre International*, San Mateo, California
- *Brandeis University*, Waltham, Massachusetts
- *ORC Macro International*, Calverton, Maryland
- *PeopleWorks*, Los Angeles, California
- *Rand Corporation*, Santa Monica, California
- *Research Triangle Institute*, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina
- *The University of California*, Los Angeles
- *Westat Incorporated*, Rockville, Maryland.

In addition to program evaluation, the appropriations for evaluation support the Corporation's Office of Evaluation that provides technical assistance on evaluation and research issues. Staff members advise grantees on the conduct of outcome-based program evaluations and program improvement studies. Evaluation staff also review grant proposals with respect to evaluation-related content. Through accomplishments reviews and demographic surveys, staff supervise the collection of information from nearly 1,300 national service programs and grantees and the nearly 50,000 individuals serving with them. Evaluation funds also support management of the Corporation's Web-based Reporting System (WBRS). It is through WBRS that AmeriCorps*State/National programs manage member enrollment and exit, track and report financial status, track accomplishments linked to program objectives, and provide the Corporation with progress reports. The Corporation also disseminates effective practice information related to national service through its new web-based, idea-exchange system known as *EpiCenter*, which is available through www.nationalservice.org.

In 2000, the Corporation carried out research and related activities intended to further understanding of national service in three areas: descriptive research, outcome research, and technical assistance (See Table 7-1). Last year, literacy initiatives were reported as a separate content area, but this year they have been incorporated into the Outcome Research section, since most of the literacy studies undertaken were completed in 1999.

Descriptive Research

Because much of the Corporation's programming is new, outcome research often follows upon a careful descriptive analysis used to inform the design of a subsequent outcome study. Descriptive studies completed in fiscal 2000 included accomplishments surveys, that is, program output surveys, of AmeriCorps*State/National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and the three National Senior Service programs.

Two customer satisfaction surveys took place during 2000: a customer satisfaction survey of AmeriCorps*State/National grantees and another seeking to gauge the satisfaction of communities served by Corporation programs. This type of descriptive research is valuable for program managers seeking to improve the quality of the Corporation's services to grantees and to ensure that the Corporation's programming, in turn, is well received by the communities served. Related to these studies, a survey of national opinion leaders began during 2000, to determine how influential, nonprofit, philanthropic, and academic leaders view national service and the role it can play in addressing the nation's issues.

Table 7-1. Activities of the Office of Evaluation, Fiscal 2000			
Title	Conducted by	Ended in 2000	Active in 2001
Studies begun before Fiscal 2000			
<i>Evaluation of the 1998-1999 Seniors for Schools Demonstration Program</i>	Aguirre International	X	
<i>1998-1999 VISTA Accomplishment Survey and Tracking Database</i>	Aguirre International	X	
<i>1998-1999 Annual Accomplishments Review Data Collection (AmeriCorps*State/National Direct)</i>	Aguirre International	X	
<i>1998-1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey (AmeriCorps*State/National Direct Grantees)</i>	Macro	X	
<i>1998-1999 Member Demographic Survey (All AmeriCorps)</i>	Westat	X	
<i>An Evaluation of the Implementation of Citizenship Training Materials</i>	People Works	X	
<i>An Evaluability Assessment of NCCC Impact: Project Case Studies</i>	Westat	X	
<i>A Study of Longitudinal Member Outcomes, Data Collection Phase</i>	Abt Associates		X
<i>Senior Companion Program Quality of Care Outcome Evaluation, Data Collection Phase</i>	Research Triangle		X
<i>Development of a Web-Based Annual Accomplishments Tracking System for AmeriCorps*State/National Direct Programs</i>	Aguirre International		X
<i>An Assessment of the Sustainability of VISTA Project Activities</i>	People Works		X
<i>1999-2000 Customer Satisfaction Survey of Indirect Customers (NCCC, NSSC, VISTA) (now known as the Community Satisfaction Survey)</i>	Macro		X

(Table continued on next page)

Table 7-1. Activities of the Office of Evaluation, Fiscal 2000			
Title	Conducted by	Ended in 2000	Active in 2001
Studies Begun in Fiscal 2000			
<i>Evaluation of the 1999-2000 Seniors for Schools Demonstration Program</i>	Aguirre International		X
<i>NCCC Impact Phase II: In-depth Study of 100 Projects</i>	Westat		X
<i>An Evaluation of Reading Outcomes among Students Tutored by AmeriCorps Members</i>	Abt Associates		X
<i>Senior Corps Futures Study</i>	Westat		X
<i>Institutionalization of Service Learning</i>	Westat		X
<i>1999-2000 AmeriCorps*State/National Direct Accomplishments Survey</i>	Aguirre International		X
<i>1999-2000 Foster Grandparents Accomplishments Survey</i>	Aguirre International		X
<i>1999-2000 Senior Companion Accomplishments Survey</i>	Aguirre International		X
<i>1999-2000 RVSP Accomplishments Survey</i>	Aguirre International		X
<i>National Opinion Leadership Survey</i>	Westat		X
<i>NCCC 1999-2000 Continuous Improvement Survey</i>	Research Triangle Institute		X
Ongoing Activities			
<i>Evaluation Technical Assistance to Corporation Programs</i>	Aguirre		
<i>Management of Web-Based Reporting System for AmeriCorps*State/National Direct</i>	Aguirre		
<i>EpiCenter, Effective Practices Website</i>	ETR		

Source: Office of Evaluation. Corporation for National Service.

During fiscal 2000, Aguirre International collected and analyzed accomplishment data (output measures) for the 1999-2000 program year for all three branches of AmeriCorps (Aguirre 2000). Aguirre also completed accomplishment data collection for the three Senior Corps programs for program year 1998-1999. Member demographic surveys were not conducted this year because of the burden of data collection on AmeriCorps programs resulting from the longitudinal study of AmeriCorps members. A system for capturing the accomplishment data for AmeriCorps*State and National grantees was incorporated into the Web-based Reporting System (WBRS) as an on-line progress report.

Outcome Research

Through 2000, the Corporation continued managing its most significant effort to date to determine the impact of service on AmeriCorps members. The longitudinal study of AmeriCorps

members collected pre-service and post-service data from random samples of AmeriCorps members and from comparison group members.

In 2000, the Corporation focussed on the impact of AmeriCorps tutoring programs on the reading ability of children in the early grades. Following on descriptive research conducted in 1999, Abt Associates, under contract to the Corporation, conducted a study of reading outcomes among students in kindergarten and 1st and 2nd grades who received tutoring help from AmeriCorps members. Students completed pre- and post-program standardized reading assessments. Their progress was compared to expected annual gains based on national norms. The study found that students tutored by AmeriCorps members achieved greater reading gains than would have been expected according to nationally standardized norms for children at their grade level. The final report on this study will be released in 2001.

Aguirre International continued a second, smaller-scale reading outcomes study into its third year during 2000. Aguirre analyzed data collected from the National Senior Service Corps' Seniors for Schools demonstration projects and began a fourth year of data collection. (Aguirre International 2000). This modest study has produced credible positive results showing that the program produced positive outcomes in reading proficiency and attitudes toward reading among the students tutored by senior volunteers.

These Corporation studies produced findings comparable to those summarized in a review published in 2000 by the Journal of Educational Psychology. The review concluded that one-on-one tutoring programs using community volunteers and college students to help improve children's reading skills can be highly effective if the tutors have received appropriate training. According to the authors of the review, "well-designed, reliably implemented, one-to-one interventions can make a significant contribution to improved reading outcomes for many students whose poor reading skills place them at risk for academic failure" (Elbaum and others 2000)

In 2000, Research Triangle Institute continued a comparison group investigation of the effect of the Senior Companion Program on the quality of life of frail senior citizens living independently. This research will not only shed light on the effectiveness of the Senior Companion Program, but will also constitute a significant addition to the general literature on improving the quality of life for frail, older persons. An interim report will be issued in 2001 with the final report of this multi-year study due in 2003.

In 1999, Westat, Inc. began an outcome study of the AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps. During the initial phase, investigators conducted a series of case studies of NCCC service projects to determine the types of outcomes that the program might have. In addition, they looked for methods that would most likely succeed in capturing NCCC impacts on a larger scale. That exploratory study found outcomes in a range of service projects and the best methods for measuring those outcomes. Currently, a national sample of nearly 100 projects is being studied to assess the outcomes of the NCCC.

Technical Assistance

The Corporation believes that establishing and measuring outcome objectives at the local, service-program level is a tool for improving the value of the service. Most Corporation-supported service programs create annual outcome objectives and track progress toward their achievement.

Project Star

To support their efforts, grantees and subgrantees have access to extensive technical assistance in evaluation. During fiscal 2000, Project STAR of Aguirre International, a technical assistance provider in evaluation, provided numerous forms of technical assistance to Corporation programs across the streams of service. Client groups for this service included the AmeriCorps State and National grantees, VISTA programs, Indian Tribal programs, Territorial programs, State Commissions, Learn and Serve Higher Education consortia, Learn and Serve K-12 and Community-Based Organizations, and the National Senior Service Corps. Project STAR also worked with the Corporation to determine effective ways to deliver assistance to new national service initiatives, such as America Reads and America's Promise.

Project STAR responded to 648 requests to provide support and training in assessing results (hence the acronym). They conducted 44 site visits to AmeriCorps*State and National Direct programs, providing intensive assistance to develop measurable objectives, create or adapt tools for data collection, analyze data, and report results to stakeholders. Project STAR provided technical assistance in these areas with 54 programs by telephone. In fiscal 2000, Project STAR conducted 268 objective reviews. The marked increase in objectives reviews is attributed to the large number of newly competed grants, as well as to specific requests by fourteen state commissions to have Project STAR review the objectives of all AmeriCorps State programs in their states. To build evaluation capacity further, Project STAR responded to 54 requests by state commissions for on-site assistance and presentations and also provided phone assistance to seven state commissions. In response to the increased demand for training, Project STAR presented 66 workshops at 41 conferences, reaching approximately 2,292 participants.

Project STAR maintains a resource library on program evaluation materials and tools to support the Corporation's issue areas of education, public safety, human needs, and the environment. In fiscal 2000, Project STAR responded to 250 requests for tools and materials to measure outcomes of program activities. The Internet web page is another valuable resource for information on outcome-based evaluation. Programs used the interactive tools on the web page to develop 109 objectives and 19 evaluation plans. Project STAR also publishes a quarterly newsletter that is disseminated nationwide.

Because of these comprehensive efforts, some programs requested more advanced training and technical assistance, and Project STAR developed additional materials and workshops to meet these needs. Corporation program officers also reported marked improvement among programs that have received evaluation technical assistance.

Web-Based Reporting System

In 1998, the Corporation began wide-scale implementation for AmeriCorps*State/National Direct grantees and sub-grantees of a web-based member enrollment and exit system, referred to as WBRS. In 1999, the system was expanded to permit programs to submit financial reports via the Internet. In FY 2000, a third module was added to the system. The Automated Progress Report (APR) links member management, financial reporting, and the tracking of programmatic outcomes into a single management system. Through the APR, programs can produce periodic progress reports that inherit information from the financial and member-related functions of WBRS so that progress reporting becomes significantly automated.

Perhaps more significant, the APR incorporates the outcome orientation of AmeriCorps goals and provides programs with the capacity to integrate their management and evaluation functions.

Each program creates outcome-oriented annual program objections and records them in WBRS. They then associate them with standardized sets of accomplishment categories for reporting purposes. As programs track their outputs during the year, they can be entered into WBRS and will be associated with the outcomes to which they are related. When outcome data are collected, they too will be associated with the appropriate program outcomes. Thus, although it is fundamentally a reporting system, WBRS facilitates better program practice by being of greatest value to programs that employ outcome-based performance management. Those programs that do so find that progress reporting and generating information about the efforts of their programs are made efficient and effective.

AmeriCorps*State/National Direct programs now use WBRS for member management and financial reporting. Beginning with the final progress report of FY 2000, they will be using WBRS to submit their progress reports. There will be a significant learning period as programs adapt to using the progress reporting system. Because of the integration of program evaluation into WBRS, the technical assistance staff at the WBRS Help Desk and the coaches of Project STAR, the evaluation technical assistance provider, are working more closely together under the umbrella of the contractor for both activities, Aguirre International.

In future years, the Corporation will continue to add features to WBRS that will enhance its utility as a management system and will reward programs seeking to use output and outcome to improve their services to community.

EpiCenter

In 2000, the Office of Evaluation launched the effective practices information center, known as EpiCenter, a web-based searchable database of program practices, designed to help in creating and managing national service programs. Its purpose is to share timely, relevant information that will lead to sustainable programs and positive outcomes for program participants, beneficiaries, organizations, and communities.

Effective practices are derived from a variety of sources, including findings from program evaluations, the expertise of technical assistance providers and resource specialists, and the experience of program practitioners and service partners. EpiCenter is premised on a specific definition of an effective practice: an action that solves a problem and leads to a constructive outcome. Practices address issues shared across service programs and can be replicated in or adapted to serve more than one locale. Each practice posted to the database describes the problem solved, presents details about the context, indicates the level of outcome achieved, and provides evidence of success. This information is abstracted, with a one-page summary provided and additional links given to the full text documents or pertinent web sites, as shown on the following page.

Users are able to search the database for practices related to education, public safety, human needs, and the environment, along with practices representing common program management concerns (e.g., recruitment, volunteer management, and sustainability). EpiCenter also enables users to contribute effective program practices to the database and submit material online. Research and outreach to identify additional effective practices are ongoing, as is the effort to expand the range of topics.

As a technical assistance resource, EpiCenter functions as a knowledge broker, intended to reach the widest possible audience. It responds to the needs of service programs for timely, useful information, delivered in readily-accessible formats, and to the need to link knowledge and practice to foster organization learning. In fiscal 2001, the Corporation will hold a competition to design

nate a technical assistance provider to maintain the site, increase the holdings in the database, and provide support to users.

LEARNS Literacy Assessment Profile

During 1999, the LEARNS Literacy Assessment Profile (LLAP), an assessment tool for tutors, was developed as a collaborative effort among Corporation staff, grantees, and a technical assistance provider. LLAP instructs tutors on the essential competencies of reading while permitting them to develop a detailed picture of their students' reading ability and providing a quantitative measure of change in reading ability. It also serves as a record-keeping device for tutoring sessions. LLAP was published in 2000 and is now used by dozens of programs throughout the United States. The tool is so well regarded that it has been adopted by some school systems not otherwise associated with Corporation tutoring efforts.

An Example of an EpiCenter Abstract	
Title	Effective Practices of Foster Grandparents in Head Start Centers
Stream	Senior Corps
Topic Area	Human Needs
Abstract	This research study, Effective Practices of Foster Grandparents in Head Start Centers , was conducted by Westat, Incorporated for the Corporation for National Service in 1998. The purpose of the study was to learn more about what Foster Grandparents do in Head Start programs and how their contributions benefit the children served. Findings from intensive observations in six classrooms in urban and rural communities indicate that Foster Grandparents engage in a wide range of activities and behaviors associated with positive developmental outcomes for children. These behaviors include engaging in a range of positive person-to-person interactions, promoting and reinforcing positive social behaviors, and providing constructive feedback and guidance. The study determined that Foster Grandparents promote the emotional well being, self-esteem, and skills development of the children they serve.
Keywords	Child care, education, mentors, mentoring, Senior Corps, Foster Grandparents, caregivers, senior service, children, human needs
Summary	Click here for summary
Full Text	Effective Practices of Foster Grandparents in Head Start Centers [1.2 mb PDF]
Submitted by	Department of Evaluation and Effective Practices, Corporation for National Service

Use of Evaluation Data

The Corporation views evaluation as a service with a variety of customers, including program managers, Corporation grantees, senior management, the Corporation's Board of Directors, the service field generally, and Congress. Each of these client groups can use evaluation findings to help manage its responsibilities with respect to national service.

Program staff at Corporation headquarters use evaluation data both to gauge areas of success and to identify those requiring improvement. They also use effective practice information to guide their grantees. For example, findings from the Reading Outcomes Study are being used to provide program managers with guidance on the characteristics of tutoring programs most likely to produce meaningful gains in reading achievement.

National service programs benefit from the Corporation's evaluation efforts in two ways. First, programs use published studies to communicate to their local stakeholders the value of service. Second, effective practices information derived from these studies helps improve the design and management of programs.

Corporation senior management uses evaluation data to improve program operations and to set program policy. For example, the AmeriCorps*NCCC Continuous Quality Improvement project will ultimately provide data on member experiences that will be used to make programming adjustments at NCCC campuses in the year the data are collected.

Finally, the interested public employs the Corporation's research findings in a variety of ways. Studies such as the on-going tutoring research, the member longitudinal studies, and the service-learning studies completed in 1998 have applicability to significant societal questions. As such, they become contributions to broad fields of inquiry well beyond national service. In addition, those wishing to know more about the service activities in their communities or those who are considering service as a solution to their communities' problems consult the Corporation's research to gauge the value of national service generally.

Data Sharing Policy

In the interest of serving the needs of the public, the Corporation has developed a policy that facilitates its sharing evaluation data with potential users. Among the reasons for developing the policy was to (1) disseminate program-relevant information, (2) make the Corporation's work more transparent to Congress and citizens, and (3) improve the return on investment for the studies it conducts.

The Corporation's formal policy assures that data are shared in accordance with laws and regulations governing privacy and confidentiality. The data sharing policy makes a variety of data available to users in the research and service communities. The richness of the database will permit data users to study many questions of interest to the national service community. The future availability of the AmeriCorps longitudinal data set, for example, should advance knowledge about educational attainment, career choices and progress, future service activities, and civic participation.

Discussion of Performance Attainment

The Corporation proposed to initiate 35 studies during 1999 (see Table 7-2) and began 24 studies. To develop its annual plan the Office of Evaluation seeks considerable input from the Corporation's program and management units. Based on their perceived research needs and those topics suggested by evaluation staff, a portfolio of proposed studies is developed and presented to the Corporation's Board of Directors. Typically, the annual evaluation plan has a large agenda with the understanding that it might well exceed staff or funding capacity within a given year depending upon the ultimate complexity and expense of each study. In addition, every program year brings the need for previously unforeseen projects that arise mid-year. In fiscal 2000, resource

requirements for unanticipated studies, plus the SCP, reading outcome, and member longitudinal studies, limited the number of new undertakings.

Table 7-2. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for Evaluation, Fiscal 2000			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of evaluation studies initiated. Source: <i>Office of Evaluation. Corporation for National Service.</i>	35	24	NO
Number of evaluation studies and research reports completed. Source: <i>Office of Evaluation. Corporation for National Service.</i>	40	18	NO
Identify additional outcome indicators for performance measurement system. Source: <i>Office of Evaluation. Corporation for National Service.</i>	Complete review by 7/00	Completed	YES
Percent of Corporation Grantees (State Commissions and State Education Agencies) and State Offices receiving evaluation technical assistance. Source: <i>Office of Evaluation. Corporation for National Service.</i>	50%	46%	YES²⁷

The 2000 goal for completed studies and research reports was 40. Only seven were completed. Key among the factors influencing the setting of this ambitious goal were the number of studies completed in 1998 and the number requested by program staff and management. A factor found during 2000 to affect significantly staff capacity to meet the goal was the continuing shift in emphasis from implementation or process studies to outcome or impact studies. Such evaluations, especially multi-year projects like the longitudinal study of AmeriCorps members, have proven to require more time and staff/fiscal resources than were initially projected. The effect of this development this year was that fewer studies could be started.

References

- Abt Associates. 1995. *Evaluation of National and Community Service Programs Final Report: National Evaluation of Serve-America*. Cambridge, MA.
- Achatz, Mary and Siler, Amy. 1997. *Evaluation of the Foster Grandparent Program: Final Report*. Westat. Rockville, MD.
- Aguirre International. 1998. *AmeriCorps 1997-1998 Accomplishments Estimates*. San Mateo, CA.
- Aguirre International. 1999a. *Making a Difference: Impact of AmeriCorps*State/National Direct on Members and Communities 1994-95 and 1995-96*. San Mateo, CA.
- Aguirre International. 1999b. *An Evaluation of AmeriCorps: Summary*. San Mateo, CA.
- Aguirre International. 1999c. *Senior Companion Program Accomplishment Summary*. San Mateo, CA.

²⁷ Completing 46 percent against a goal of 50 percent is considered substantial compliance.

- Elbaum, Batya, Sharon Vaughn, Marie Tejero Hughes, and Sally Watson Moody. December 2000. "How Effective Are One-to-One Tutoring Programs in Reading for Elementary Students at Risk for Reading Failure? A Meta-Analysis of the Intervention Research." *Journal of Educational Psychology*.
- Gray, Maryann J., E. H. Ondaatje, et al. 1998. *Combining Service and Learning in Higher Education: The Final Report of the Evaluation of the Learn and Serve America, Higher Education Program*. RAND. Santa Monica, CA.
- MacAllum, Crystal, Siler, Amy, Stolzberg, Simeon, and von Glatz, Adrienne. 1999. *Evaluation of the First Year of the AmeriCorps Education Awards Program*. Westat. Rockville, MD.
- Macro International. 1998. *Evaluation of DC Reads Book Partners Program: Year 1 Final External Report*. No city: Macro International.
- Melchior, Alan. 1998. *National Evaluation of Learn and Serve America School and Community-Based Programs: Final Report*. Waltham, MA: Center for Human Resources.
- Moss, M. A., Hiller, J. and Moore, Douglas. 1999. *Descriptive Study of AmeriCorps Literacy Programs*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates.
- National Center for Education Statistics. 1999. Service-Learning and Community Service in K-12 Public Schools. *Statistics in Brief*. Office of Educational Research. U.S. Department of Education.
- ORC Macro. 1999. *The 1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey, AmeriCorps*State and National*. ORC Macro, Calverton, MD.
- Project Star. 1999a. *Seniors for Schools: Content Analysis of 1997-98 Project Evaluation Reports*. San Mateo, CA.
- Project Star. 1999b. *Toolkit: A User's Guide to Evaluation for National Service Programs*. San Mateo, CA.
- RAND. 1998. *Coupling Service and Learning in Higher Education: the Final Report of the Evaluation of Learn and Serve America, Higher Education Program*.
- Research Triangle Institute. 1999. *Assessment of the Value-added Effect of National Service Programs on the Communities They Serve: Field Report*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Research Triangle Institute.
- Westat, Inc. 1999. *AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps: Accomplishments Report for Class IV (1997-98)*. Rockville, MD: Westat.
- Westat, Inc. 1999a. *The Community Impact of AmeriCorps*NCCC Projects: Case Study Report*. Rockville, MD: Westat.
- Westat, Inc. 1999b. *An Evaluation of DC Reads*. Rockville, MD: Westat.
- Westat, Inc. 1999c. *Foster Grandparent Program: Accomplishment Report*. Rockville, MD.
- Westat, Inc. 1999d. *Senior Companion Program: Accomplishment Report*. Rockville, MD: Westat.
- Yudd, Regina, Nguyen, Isabelle and Strang, William. 1999. *Member Surveys for AmeriCorps*State/National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and AmeriCorps*NCCC*. Rockville, MD: Westat.

CHAPTER 8. INNOVATION, DEMONSTRATION, AND ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES

The Innovation, Demonstration, and Assistance Activities include funds for a wide variety of programs and initiatives to carry out the purposes of subtitle H of the National and Community Service Act, as amended. The goals of these activities are: build the ethic of service among Americans of all ages and backgrounds; support innovative demonstration service programs that may not be eligible under other subtitles of the legislation; provide training, leadership development, and technical support to grantees and service programs receiving assistance under the Act; build a strong infrastructure at the local and state levels to support and provide technical assistance to programs; foster program effectiveness leading to high quality programs and real community impact; assist programs enrolling participants with disabilities and accommodating their participation; and support disaster relief efforts.

The activities supported by Innovation funds discussed in this chapter include:

- Training and technical assistance for all of national service
- AmeriCorps recruitment
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day grants
- Grants for individuals with disabilities
- National Service Fellows
- America Reads

Five activities funded under Innovation are presented in other chapters so that they may be more closely aligned with the areas of the Corporation where they are administered. The AmeriCorps Education Award Program, AmeriCorps Leaders, and the AmeriCorps*Promise Fellows program appear as part of the AmeriCorps*State and National chapter. Included as part of Learn and Serve America chapter are two programs funded through Innovation, but administered by the Department of Service-Learning: the President's Student Service Scholarships and the Leader Schools.

Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA)

The National and Community Service Act authorizes the Corporation to provide, directly or through contracts or cooperative agreements, training and technical assistance in support of activities under the national service laws. Accordingly, the Corporation provides training and technical assistance to enhance program quality through consistent, focused delivery of T/TA services. Corporation T/TA takes into account the needs of community-based projects, the level of resources available locally, and the Corporation's expectations and objectives.

Training and Technical Assistance Support for Programs and Projects

During the year the Corporation provided approximately \$5.6 million to state commissions to support the delivery of T/TA services to Corporation-funded programs. The Corporation encouraged state commissions to use these funds to address the training needs of all Corporation-supported programs including AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the Senior Corps. Planning for the design and delivery of supported training activities included a broad range of national service partners in the field.

The Corporation also offered training and technical assistance services in the areas of sustainability, human relations and diversity, leadership development, member development and management, financial management, training materials development, and T/TA services to state commissions. State commissions and programs identified these areas and others through national needs assessments conducted by the Corporation every three years. In addition, special assistance was available during the year to Corporation-funded programs involved in literacy.

In fiscal 2000, training and technical assistance providers conducted more than 1,500 training and technical assistance events that reached 36,000 participants. This was the first full year during which training and technical assistance offered to grantees and programs was also available to all streams of service.

T/TA providers (see Table 8-1) are experienced, well-established organizations selected by the Corporation after rigorous competition that includes both peer and staff review. All provider organizations bring strong records of accomplishment working with non-profit, volunteer, or community service agencies.

During the year T/TA resources were used to design and support major components of several Corporation conferences. These included the Native American Training Conference, 35th VISTA Anniversary Conference, National Community Service Conference, Promise Fellows Grantees' Training, Senior Corps Conference, and Learn and Serve Grantees Meeting.

The T/TA Electronic Publishing Initiative (EPI) started during the previous fiscal year was expanded to include all T/TA publications developed and revised since 1994. All publications are currently available for download from the Internet. EPI is part of an on-going, Corporation-wide effort to reduce spending on print materials and to expand accessibility to the Corporation's T/TA publications. Another example of technological innovation during the year was the launch of EpiCenter, an effective practices web site that consists of a searchable database of program practices likely to be effective in creating and managing national service programs. In addition to launching the EPI and EpiCenter initiatives, T/TA resources were used to coordinate 13 listservs that focus on subject matter of interest to particular client groups. These include state commission executive directors, state commissioners, AmeriCorps state and national program directors, AmeriCorps leaders, tribal program directors, AmeriCorps members, T/TA providers, directors of education award programs, and reading and mathematics tutors.

The Web-Based Reporting System

The Corporation's Web-Based Reporting System (WBRS), which allows AmeriCorps grantees to complete most of their transactions with the Corporation electronically, was fully implemented in FY2000. In addition to enhancing grantee capacity to enroll members, track progress, process education awards, and submit financial and progress reports more easily, WBRS has reduced the number of forms grantees must complete to fulfill their grant requirements. It also alerts Corporation staff when grants-related changes are made through the system and streamlines the process for approving them. With grantee information downloaded into its database, the National Service Trust is now able to process education awards more quickly.

Also in FY2000, as a complement to their basic WBRS training, grantees received follow-on instruction on using WBRS as a management tool for helping sub-grantees. Of the various enhancements made to WBRS during FY2000, three designed to improve the field's efficiency in managing grants were as follows:

- A reconciliation process was created, using both WBRS and Trust data, that allows the grantees and the Trust to identify and resolve more quickly questions concerning member enrollments and exits.
- The progress report that programs submit was redesigned to incorporate accomplishment information, thus eliminating the need for grantees to prepare separate accomplishment reviews.
- The process that alerts Corporation staff to take various grants- and program-related actions in WBRS was streamlined.

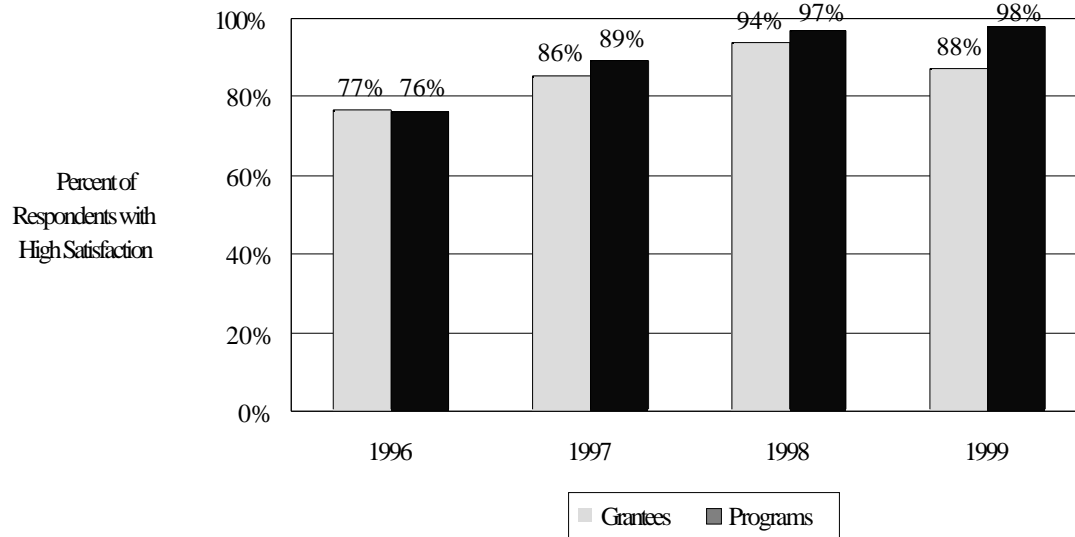
Table 8-1. Training and Technical Assistance Providers, Fiscal 2000	
Provider	Issue Area
AASSC	Peer TA for state commissions
ACKCO Inc./American Indian Professional Services	Tribal programs
Aguirre International/Project Star	Evaluation services
Aguirre International/Project TASC	Technical assistance to state commissions
Aguirre International/Leadership Development	Leadership support services to the National Service Leadership Institute
Aguirre International/WBRS	Web-based reporting system (WBRS)
Campaign Consultation, Inc.	Sustainability
Catholic Network of Volunteer Service (CNVS)	Member development and management
CHP International	Human relations and diversity training
CHP International	Training design
CHP International	Program management
National Service-Learning Clearinghouse University of Minnesota	Information collection and dissemination on Service-Learning Programs & Resources
National Youth Leadership Council	Service-learning T/TA exchange
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL)	Educational Success and support for America Reads programs
United Cerebral Palsy Associations/Access AmeriCorps	Disability issues
Walker & Company, LLP	Financial management

Source: Office of Training and Technical Assistance, Department of Evaluation and Effective Practices, Corporation for National Service.

Customer Satisfaction

In an annual customer satisfaction survey, conducted by an independent contractor, AmeriCorps grantees and sub-grantees rated the quality of training and technical assistance provided by the

Figure 8-1. Performance Measures: Customer Satisfaction with Training and Technical Assistance, 1996-1999



Source: Macro International. 2000. *1999 Customer Satisfaction Survey*. Calverton, MD.

Corporation T/TA providers. Of 116 grantees surveyed, 97 (84 percent) responded. Of 323 sub-grantees surveyed, 255 (79 percent) responded. As reflected in Figure 8-1, 87.5 percent of the grantees, and 98 percent of the sub-grantees, were highly satisfied with the services of the T/TA providers.

The Corporation has made a concerted effort during the past four years, since the first customer satisfaction survey was conducted, to make training and technical assistance more responsive to the needs of grantees. In the most recent survey, completed in 1999 and covering program year 1998-1999, nine out of ten grantees expressed high satisfaction with the training and technical assistance services provided by the Corporation.

National Service Leadership Institute

Recognizing the correlation between high quality national service programs and effective leadership, the Corporation created the National Service Leadership Institute in 1995. The Institute serves as the Corporation's primary leadership development resource, providing courses, workshops, and technical assistance to prepare individuals to be leaders who can use service and volunteering as a strategy to address real community needs, advance organizational change, and mobilize community partners for collaborative action. Since its inception, the Institute has conducted 161 programs serving over 5,800 national service leaders.

Table 8-2. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for Innovation, Fiscal 2000

Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Number of State Commissions trained in using WBRIS, the Internet-based, data-reporting system. Source: <i>Aguirre International</i> .	9	43	YES
Number of NSLI classes held for grantee staff. Source: <i>Consolidated Training Accountability Report. NSLI. Corporation for National Service</i> .	40	49	YES
Number of grantee staff members trained by NSLI. Source: <i>Consolidated Training Accountability Report. NSLI. Corporation for National Service</i> .	1,700	1,716	YES
Number of applicants to AmeriCorps. Source: <i>VISTA Applicant and Placement Data Base. NCCC Applicant and Placement Database. Office of AmeriCorps Recruitment. Corporation for National Service</i> .	VISTA:3,576 NCCC: 2,654	VISTA: 3,792 NCCC: 3,975	YES
Number of colleges & universities in America Reads. Source: <i>America Reads America Counts. U. S. Department of Education</i> .	1,250	1,403	YES

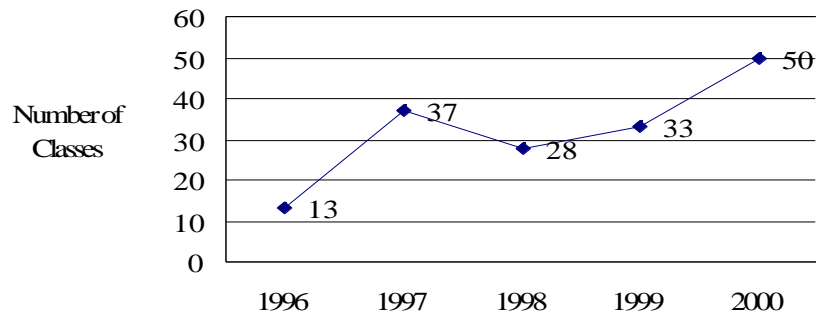
The Institute's flagship program is the National Service Leadership (NSL) Program (formerly called the National Service Executive Program). The Institute offers the NSL program several times each year. It consists of a 5_-day course complemented by a three-day follow-up component six months later. The NSL curriculum challenges national service leaders to see themselves not only as program managers, but also as catalysts for change and community strengthening. The curriculum focuses on management and leadership styles, building collaborations, managing meetings effectively, multi-group strategic planning, leveraging diversity, and leading change processes.

In 2000, the Institute strengthened its competency-based curriculum for the NSL, and further refined its basic leadership course, Fundamentals of Service Leadership (FSL), which is available to individuals relatively new to national service and leadership. The Institute continued to offer specialized service leadership workshops to the AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America community at conferences and sites throughout the country. Participants responded favorably to the Institute's programs in 2000, consistently awarding the trainers and curricula high marks for excellence.

The number of classes at NSLI increased in fiscal year 2000 by 52 percent over the previous year (see Figure 8-2) and the Institute exceeded its goals of serving 40 programs and 1,700 grantees (see Table 8-2). Two senior trainers were added to the Institute's staff, and Aguirre International was added as a training and technical assistance provider to assist in program staffing, training site management, and specialized curriculum development. The leadership curriculum has been expanded for customized training, and the Institute is working to provide more leadership training

at the state and community level. Also, the Institute is now managing the leadership competency assessment program completely in-house at great cost savings.

Figure 8-2. Number of National Service Leadership Institute Training Classes Held For Grantees In 2000



Source: Consolidated Training Accountability Report. National Service Leadership Institute. Corporation for National Service.

Training Results

In general, the Corporation's training efforts, as well as those of local programs with grant funds, are having direct benefits for members. An evaluation completed in 1999 (Aguirre 1999) found that:

- The AmeriCorps experience improves an individual's performance on a range of skills and abilities necessary to succeed in the workplace. Seventy-five percent of AmeriCorps members reported gains in life skills, which included communication skills, interpersonal skills, analytical problem-solving, understanding organizational systems, and information technology.

“My year in AmeriCorps made me realize I want to devote my life to improving the education of children in our society, particularly those with language barriers and other special needs.” Rachel Wittenberg, from Rochester, N.Y., who served in a Big Brothers/Big Sisters program in Tucson, Arizona.

These benefits occur for all AmeriCorps members, including those with the least developed skills when entering the program. In fact, the study found that the gains are most dramatic among those entering with the least developed skills.

AmeriCorps Recruitment

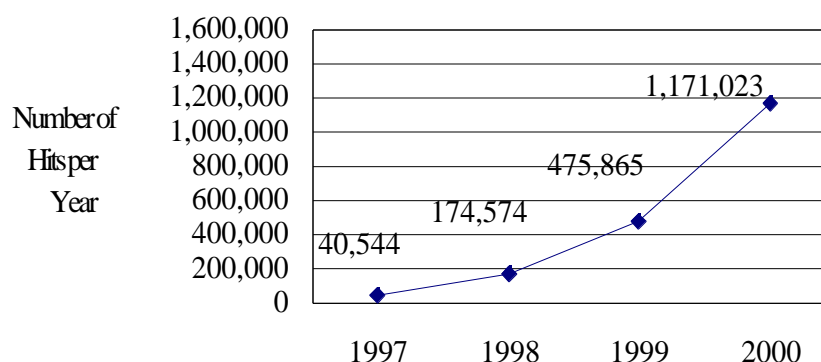
AmeriCorps Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (RSP) is responsible for the recruitment, selection, and placement of all nationally recruited AmeriCorps*VISTA members, and all AmeriCorps*NCCC members. Selection and placement include interviewing and evaluating prospective members for appropriate skills, legal clearances, suitability, references, and, in the case of NCCC, medical status. RSP also supports overall AmeriCorps recruitment by publicizing the

program and referring individuals to AmeriCorps*State and National programs through recruiters, the 1-800 contractor, and the AmeriCorps recruitment web pages.

In fiscal 2000, total inquiries to the 1-800 number were 64,499, compared with 82,427 in fiscal 1999. This decrease represents a strategic shift toward advertising and marketing which directs individuals to the AmeriCorps web site, as well as the continued growth in the American public's use of the Internet as a major source of information. Hits against the Corporation's AmeriCorps web site have increased twenty-nine fold over the last several years, from over 40,500 to almost 1.2 million (see Figure 8-3).

In fiscal 2000, the Corporation began the process of building an interactive, web-based system to link applicants directly with programs throughout the country. The system will become operational in fiscal 2001.

**Figure 8-3. Hits on the Americorps Website
1997-2000**



Source: AmeriCorps Recruitment. Corporation for National Service.

In fiscal 2000, the Corporation enhanced the AmeriCorps recruitment web pages by including new graphics and adding profiles of AmeriCorps members. Advertising and marketing efforts targeted the recruitment of more minorities and males.

Given the need to reach all individuals with a potential interest in joining AmeriCorps, the 1-800 telephone service will continue to be a source for program information, brochures, and applications.

In fiscal 2000, applications to join the AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps numbered 3,975 and exceeded available positions by nearly 4:1. AmeriCorps*VISTA applications totaled 3,792 in fiscal 2000 compared to 3,526 the previous year.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Grants

For fiscal 2000, the Corporation awarded 137 grants to nonprofit organizations to support service in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This initiative is specifically authorized under the National and Community Service Act. Martin Luther King, Jr. service events were the largest and most effective in the history of the Corporation, as individuals and public and private organizations commemorated his legacy by assisting those in need in 39 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. The largest home electronics retailer, Best Buy Company, Inc., supplemented the Corporation's grant funds for this purpose, making the total dollars supporting these service activities \$590,000.

Service activities were as diverse as the institutions that sponsored them. New Hampshire celebrated its first-ever King holiday with service projects throughout the state. Atlanta continued its annual weekend of activities to honor Dr. King, culminating in service sites across the city on January 17. In Philadelphia, their city-wide day of service garnered more than 20,000 volunteers, and in Bloomington, Indiana there were more than 30 projects which were summarized in a book entitled "A Day On! Not A Day Off." In keeping with one of our goals that all young people be offered the opportunity to serve, high school students in Jefferson County Colorado were paired with elementary school students as reading buddies.

Disability Programs

In fiscal 2000, the Corporation's technical assistance contractor supported program efforts to reach out to individuals with disabilities and to support providing reasonable accommodations necessary for joining national service programs. State commissions updated their disability plans in order to assist AmeriCorps programs in recruiting and placing more people with disabilities as AmeriCorps members.

The Corporation's ability to expand its efforts to include members with disabilities in national service programs is currently constrained by authorizing legislation. It limits the application of disability funds for placement and reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities only to competitive AmeriCorps programs. While efforts to amend that legislation were underway, the Corporation launched major outreach and training activities throughout the fiscal year. The Corporation held a national conference for 400 people including representatives from national disability organizations, disability coordinators from state commissions, and program directors from AmeriCorps*State and National, AmeriCorps*VISTA, and the Senior Corps. The purpose was multi-fold: to present tools and techniques for effectively integrating people with disabilities into national service programs, to understand how to collaborate with the disability community, to understand how disability organizations can become part of national service, and to develop collaborative relationships with key disability organizations. Many program staff established contacts who can help them reach out to more people with disabilities. Four national disability organizations requested that the Corporation deliver presentations at their annual conferences to inform their members about national service and encourage participation.

As a result of discussions at the conference, the Corporation funded three national organizations to support service days or events that include persons with disabilities. The goal of such grants is to increase the number of persons with disabilities who are familiar with service and who may therefore choose to join a national service program or project as a result of their service experience. Youth Service America, for example, will integrate youth with disabilities into service activities at 104 sites around the country on National Youth Service Day. Twenty volunteer centers will join with the Points of Light Foundation to include people with disabilities in single or mul-

multiple service events at many local sites. City Cares has chosen 24 cities in which it will include people with disabilities in its service events.

In addition, the Corporation announced the availability of funds for outreach to individuals with a disability to increase their participation in national service. Eight organizations will provide outreach under these funds during fiscal years 2001 and 2002.

National Service Fellowship Program

In the third year of the National Service Fellowship Program, the Corporation made twelve new awards to individuals who proposed a project that would further the mission of the Corporation and, more broadly, the service field. The awards each covered a nine-month period and allowed the recipients to immerse themselves in a project (see Table 8-3 for a listing of the projects and their outcomes).

The award recipients came from diverse vocational and academic backgrounds; several had recently completed service as AmeriCorps members. The Corporation provided a support system to help promote dialogue among the fellows. The experience served to increase the depth and breadth of their final products. Profiles of the fellows and copies of their works are available on the Corporation's web site at <http://www.nationalservice.org>.

Table 8-3. Products of the National Service Fellowship Program, Fiscal 2000	
Product Citation	Description
Biver, Nancie. <i>An Approach to Community University Partnerships: Discoveries on the Road to America's Promise</i> . New Orleans, July 2000.	Provides recommendations for how universities and communities can partner to create meaningful community participation in planning and implementing programs and projects supporting America's Promise.
Blake, Amy R. <i>Senior Volunteers in Literacy Programs: A Study of Design and Practice</i> . Portland, Oregon, September 2000.	Examines the outcomes of senior citizen individualized tutoring on student attitudes and performance, and identifies critical factors of successful tutoring programs using older volunteers.
Bonn, Amy. <i>Stone Soup Community Development: Sustainability and AmeriCorps*VISTA Projects</i> . Ithaca, New York, July 2000.	Provides a supervisor's guide for developing workplans, a sustainability training curriculum, and a sustainability workbook for AmeriCorps VISTAs. The series provides the AmeriCorps VISTA community with strategies, skill building activities and tools, and templates to help host sites plan, implement, and sustain their projects.
Burke, Sabrina. <i>After the Summit: Building Community Networks for America's Youth</i> . Portland, Oregon, August 2000.	Provides a handbook to help America's Promise practitioners develop networks, which address community needs, create potential solutions, and share human and financial solutions.

(table continues on next page)

Table 8-3. Products of the National Service Fellowship Program, Fiscal 2000	
Product Citation	Description
Chi, Bernadette S. <i>Service-Learning as 'Citizenship' Education: The Promise and the Puzzles</i> , September 2000.	Examines how K-12 service-learning partnerships enhance student citizenship and civic and other potential outcomes. The study is based on qualitative and quantitative data gathered from seven California school district partnerships.
Habib, Deborah Leta. <i>Schools Serving for Social Justice</i> . Orange, Massachusetts, July 2000.	Provides a descriptive study of service learning projects that promote social justice and multicultural education. The study includes recommendations for future programming initiatives.
Kramer, Michael. <i>Make it Last Forever: The Institutionalization of Service Learning in America</i> . Hilo, Hawaii, June 2000.	Examines the critical components of sustainable service-learning programs. The study is based on interview data collected from 80 schools.
Madigan, Patty. The Environmental Service-Learning Research Project. Mendocino, California, July 2000.	Identifies promising practices and successful strategies in environmental service-learning partnerships. The research is based on nationwide surveys of nearly 100 programs and stakeholder interviews at 20 sites. An in-depth analysis was completed at four selected community-based and school-based sites.
Naughton, Sandra. <i>Youth and Communities Helping Each Other</i> . San Luis Obispo, California, July 2000.	Presents profiles highlighting the successful strategies of 15 community-based service learning programs. The methodology undertaken included a survey and interviews with selected program staff and participants.
Penn, Everette B. <i>Reducing Delinquency Through Service</i> . Prairie View, Texas, July 2000.	Identifies the critical components of five successful juvenile delinquency prevention programs that include a service-learning component.
Swanson, Elizabeth. <i>The Chicago and Philadelphia Service-Learning Initiatives: Examining Policies and Practices</i> . Chicago, July 2000.	Identifies the best service-learning practices of five schools in each of the Chicago and Philadelphia public school systems, and offers recommendations for approaches to implementing service learning and policy and training considerations.
Trimble, Nicole. <i>Preparing Tomorrow's Community Leaders Today</i> . Seattle, July 2000.	Provides a manual for training AmeriCorps Leaders, AmeriCorps team leaders, VISTA leaders, and Promise Fellows. The manual's curriculum was developed based on surveys and interviews with a cross-section of national service leaders.

Source: Department of Program Planning and Integration. Corporation for National Service.

Literacy Programs

The program and evaluation sections of this report describe most of the Corporation's efforts related to literacy. During fiscal year 2000, the Corporation contributed to an overall goal that all children learn to read well and independently by the end of the third grade.

Under this activity, the Corporation has taken several steps to support high-quality literacy programs across the streams of service. In fiscal year 2000, the Corporation's literacy technical assistance provider, a consortium involving the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory and the

Bank Street College of Education, disseminated information about best practices and the latest research to programs that use volunteers, AmeriCorps members, Senior Corps members, high school students, and others to tutor children. These organizations also provide ongoing support through a number of mechanisms: a web site with research-based practices and downloadable materials, materials development and distribution, ongoing technical assistance through toll-free access, and regional or state-based education training events. During fiscal year 1999, the consortium supported 49 training events for over 3,022 project staff and AmeriCorps*VISTA members, and responded to almost 900 technical assistance requests from those implementing literacy programs.

The Corporation worked closely with the Department of Education to make sure that the information shared is based on sound research and evaluation. The Corporation has conducted joint training events with the Department. Also, the Corporation's web site directs programs to the web site at the Department of Education, and refers programs to documents produced by the Department of Education, or to materials that have been jointly produced by the Corporation and the Department of Education.

The Corporation also collaborated with other organizations, such as the National Institute for Literacy and Reading Is Fundamental, to benefit from their expertise and to encourage the national service community to use of their products, such as the National Research Council's "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children."

In addition, during fiscal year 2000, the partnership between the Department of Education and the Corporation helped to support over 1,200 colleges and universities participating in literacy programs (see Table 8-2). Under this effort, federal work study students are placed in community service literacy programs where they are trained and supervised locally and where they receive the support of training and technical assistance providers as well as local schools and schools of education. An amendment to the Higher Education Act required that, as of July 2000, all institutions of higher education participating in federal work-study, more than 3,000, support the tutoring activity of work-study students. As a result of this requirement, the Corporation will no longer report on the number of institutions participating in work study.

The Corporation uses a variety of strategies to capitalize on the literacy expertise that exists in communities, and to ensure that all programs have access to literacy training, materials, and expertise on a nationwide basis. The Corporation is committed to supporting high quality programs. The training of members and volunteers is therefore seen as necessary to ensure that programs achieve the maximum impact.

The University of Pennsylvania's America Reads Partnership with the Drew Elementary School and the Wilson Elementary School in Philadelphia is a university-assisted, student-initiated, community-school managed and supported program. The focus is on both school-day and extended-day literacy promotion activities that run from Mondays through Thursdays - 3 to 4:30 p.m. - with over 80 instructional meetings each year. These programs are staffed by fifty America Reads work-study university students, most of whom focus their academic study on teaching as well as service-learning students from West Philadelphia High School and elementary school teachers. Activities include literacy tutoring, help with homework, and literacy-based enrichment activities.

The Corporation has supported and encouraged comprehensive program evaluations to determine the effect of literacy programs on children's reading abilities. In October, 2000, Abt Associates, under contract to the Corporation, released its preliminary findings of an evaluation of the impact of AmeriCorps tutoring programs on children's reading levels. This study was a follow-up to an Abt study conducted the previous year that found that programs in which AmeriCorps members serve were generally following best tutoring practices. During program year 1999-2000, at least 100,000 students in first through third grades were tutored by AmeriCorps members. Abt concluded:

"The tutored students at all grade levels improved their reading performance from pretest to posttest *more than the gain expected for the typical child at their grade level*. Reading comprehension and reading skills started out below grade-level; by year-end, students closed the gap and were reading at or near the grade-level expectation. ...the reading gains range from 3.7 to 6.6 points, depending on the grade and reading score. All of the gains are statistically significant, most at the .01 or .001 level. Another way to interpret the size of these gains is in terms of their 'effect size.' These gains represent effect sizes ranging from .25 to .33. According to the convention in the field, this kind of effect size is small but educationally significant."

These findings are consistent with the findings of recently completed, independent studies of subsets of programs across the country. To illustrate:

- According to a report conducted by the Portland-based Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, the Washington Reading Corps, a tutoring program funded mostly by the state of Washington, has led to "impressive gains" in reading scores for thousands of students. AmeriCorps members and volunteer tutors, as well as school systems throughout the state, are engaged in the effort. The study found that on average the 26,000 participating pupils in second through fifth grade, who had read nearly one year below their grade level in the fall of 1999, had pulled to within one month of their grade level by the end of last school year.
- An evaluation of a literacy program in 16 schools of the District of Columbia, supported by AmeriCorps and service learning, documented that tutored students demonstrated greater gains on the SAT 9 reading tests than did non-tutored students. Tutored students gained nearly twice as much as non-tutored students, thus narrowing the gap between lower performing tutored students and their higher performing classmates.
- In a book entitled *Social Programs That Work*, a University of Texas researcher documented gains for a Reading One-to-One Program. Tutored students gained 0.4 to 0.7 grade equivalents above what they would have attained without tutoring. The program uses college students, AmeriCorps members, and community residents to tutor more than 6,000 students in more than 70 schools across ten school districts (Farkas 1998).

Seniors for Schools was another Corporation-sponsored literacy program that involved senior volunteers tutoring children in reading in six sites throughout the country. Project STAR compiled evaluation data from the sites and found that in the 1999-2000 school year 486 volunteers tutored 5,360 children in 51 schools. Ninety-two percent of the tutored students improved in their reading skills. While 94 percent of students tested started the year below their expected reading level (some by 2 levels or more), 58 percent of the tutored students gained one full reading level or more and 39 percent were reading at their expected grade level by post-test. In addition, all the

principals and 93 percent of teachers would like the volunteers back again next year. In all, the data collected show a program that is well received, supported by schools and communities, and affects positive change in students.

References

- Abt Associates, Inc. 2000. *AmeriCorps Tutoring and Student Reading Achievements: Preliminary Findings*. Cambridge, MA.
- Aguirre International. 1999. *Making a Difference: Impact of AmeriCorps*State/National Direct on Members and Communities 1994-1995 and 1995-1996*. San Mateo, CA.
- Moss, Marc, Jordan Hiller, and Douglas Moore. 1999. *Descriptive Study of AmeriCorps Literacy Programs: State and National*. Abt Associates. Cambridge, MA.

CHAPTER 9. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Fiscal 2000 was a landmark year for the Corporation – for the first time it received an unqualified opinion on its consolidated financial statements. This achievement resulted from a commitment to strong management control and accountability for financial resources. The Corporation has put in place a top-flight management team, invested in state-of-the-art systems, engaged its bipartisan Board of Directors in active oversight, and performed the hard work to correct past mistakes. The Corporation is positioned to manage its program and grant portfolio efficiently and effectively. The efforts at improvement, however, will not stop here.

Clean Audit for Fiscal 2000

Table 9-1. Corporation Audit Results – Fiscal 1996 through 2000					
Type of Opinion	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Unqualified					✓
Unqualified Balance Sheet only ²⁸			✓	✓	
Qualified Balance Sheet only ²⁹		✓			
Financial Statements Not Audit-able	✓				

Source: Chief Financial Officer, Corporation for National Service

The Corporation made a concerted effort to improve its operations and correct the material weaknesses and reportable conditions identified in past financial audits. This progress is reflected in the fiscal 2000 financial statement audit results. The number of operational areas deemed to be materially weak was reduced from ten in 1996 to one in fiscal 2000. In its opinion on the Corporation's fiscal 2000 financial statements, the audit firm of KPMG stated, "We concluded that the Corporation's financial statements as of and for the year ended September 30, 2000, are presented fairly, in all material respects, in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America." The Corporation has reached the point where it is on solid, financial ground.

²⁸ The financial statements were fully auditable. The auditors issued an unqualified opinion on the Statement of Financial Position and disclaimed on the Statement of Operations and Statement of Cash Flows.

²⁹ Only the Statement of Financial Position was auditable.

Table 9-2. Corporation Management Control Issues – Fiscal 1996 through 2000³⁰					
Type of Weakness	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Material Weakness	10	7	8	5	1
Reportable Condition	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	10	10	10	7	3

Source: Chief Financial Officer, Corporation for National Service.

While the Corporation's fiscal 1999 financial audit reported five material weaknesses, the Corporation believes that two of the areas cited (Net Position and Fund Balance with Treasury) were not materially weak. These areas now constitute the two "Reportable Conditions" reflected in the table above. Over the past year, the Corporation has taken several, major corrective actions. Accordingly, the Corporation can report that the following four areas are not considered to be materially weak:

Financial Management and Reporting. The Corporation has filled all non-political financial management leadership positions and has implemented a new core financial system, American Management System's *Momentum Financials*. Fiscal 2000 was the first year in which the system was fully operational for the entire year. The Corporation has been using the new system to produce financial statements on a monthly basis. The Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP) certifies Momentum as meeting Federal financial systems requirements. As newer JFMIP-certified releases of the software become available, the Corporation will continue to obtain upgrades to ensure that federal system requirements are met.

The Corporation continues to update its financial management policies and procedures to reflect current workflow under the new system; however, policies do exist for most financial management activities. In addition, during fiscal 2000, a formal procedure was established for the monthly review of general ledger accounts and account reconciliations and a financial statement disclosure checklist was prepared and reviewed prior to the financial statements' issuance.

The Corporation has also begun to enhance the overall presentation of its financial information by reporting costs, including an allocation of those costs related to administration, for the Corporation's service programs and separately for the operations of the Trust.

General Control Environment. The Corporation has completed the majority of its action plan tasks related to the general control environment. The remaining open tasks reflect the continuation of initiatives that are now well established including a strong commitment by senior management to resolve financial management weaknesses, improve training, and maintain a comprehensive management control program. The action plan is regularly shared with senior management and used to monitor the Corporation's progress in meeting its critical assignments. The

³⁰ In order to provide comparable information for all five years presented, the source for fiscal 1996 through 1999 data is OIG briefing material provided to Congressional oversight committee staff. The source for fiscal 2000 data is OIG report 01-01, the audit of the Corporation's fiscal 2000 financial statements.

Corporation is actively following the action plan and is maintaining documentation in support of completed actions.

The Corporation's management control program includes providing appropriate training to managers on the purpose of controls and how the Corporation develops, implements, assesses, corrects, and reports on controls. The management control program is conducted through a four-part process:

- A self-assessment of controls by Corporation managers using a structured questionnaire.
- An examination of all completed questionnaires by CFO staff and an on-site management review to test independently selected areas determined to be the highest risk.
- The provision of feedback, including noting areas for improvement at locations reviewed.
- The documentation of results for analyses and planning future reviews and improvement efforts.

Under the management control program, certain areas of the Corporation's operations are tested annually (e.g. accounting, grants) and all others on a cyclical basis (at least once every three years). During fiscal 2000, the Corporation surveyed 18 operational areas and performed additional on-site verification testing at 11 of the 18. The results of this testing supported the conclusion that management controls provide reasonable assurance that the Corporation's objectives are met.

Fund Balance with Treasury. During fiscal 2000, the Corporation began reconciling its fund balance with Treasury at the appropriation level on a monthly basis. The reconciliation work is reviewed and signed off on by the Director of Accounting or another supervisor. The aggregate unreconciled difference of \$3.4 million on September 30, 1999, enumerated in the fiscal 1999 audit report, has been reduced to \$1.1 million as of September 30, 2000. We believe this initiative will resolve any remaining significant differences in fiscal 2001.

Net Position. The Corporation established procedures in fiscal 2000 to routinely review open obligations and deobligate funds on a monthly basis. These reviews are in addition to the monthly review and analyses of appropriations, general ledger account balances, and net position by CFO staff to detect unusual activity and make appropriate corrections. In addition, the Corporation's financial management system automatically deobligates remaining balances when a final payment is made via the "final flag" feature. The Corporation believes these actions resolve the reportable condition in this area.

Grants Management

While we believe that the Corporation's management controls provide reasonable assurance that its objectives are being met, there is more work to be done to correct the one remaining material weakness and fully achieve the goals established in the Corporation's Action Plan.

To resolve the grants management material weakness, the focus will be on three areas: (1) designing and implementing a single grants management system that will interface with *Momentum*; (2) continuing to close out expired grants; and (3) implementing a comprehensive OMB Circular A-133 (*Audit of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations*) policy.

In fiscal 2000, the Corporation began work on a long-range project to reengineer its grant processes and to build an information system to manage those processes. Throughout the fall, many Corporation employees spent hundreds of hours with the systems designers to redesign and consolidate processes and document a new system to reflect those improved processes. That design work was completed in December.

The system will be built in ORACLE and will share many of the same tables of the Corporation's System for Programs, Agreements, and National Service Participants. When completed, the Corporation will have an integrated grants management system providing comprehensive financial management information for all grants and cooperative agreements. The design meets the Grants Financial System Requirements of the JFMIP and the requirements of the Government Paperwork Elimination Act and the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act.

Once the system is fully implemented, potential grantees will be able to apply for Corporation grants using a common electronic standard form on the Internet. The Corporation will also be able to perform peer review of grant proposals over the Internet. All employees of the Corporation will be able to perform their role-based grant functions in one system. Both financial and progress reporting will be done over the Internet. The system will be linked to the Corporation's *Momentum* financial management system so that all financial data systems will interface efficiently. Much of the current labor-intensive tracking and notifying-affected-parties requirements will be automated. All of the Corporation's grant activity (including tracking OMB Circular A-133 audit reports) with appropriate audit trails will be done in one place.

National Service Trust

The National Service Trust provides funds for education awards for eligible participants who complete service under AmeriCorps. The award can be used to repay qualified student loans and repay eligible interest expense. The award can pay for the cost of attending an institution of higher education and pay expenses for an approved school-to-work program. The Trust database maintains information on over 215,000 enrollees who have earned or are in the process of earning the education award. The Corporation needs to maintain records and serve the on-going needs of these members, a workload increasing annually by approximately 20 percent. The Corporation has sought to automate the system as much as possible. The first step was to implement an imaging system to input member forms and records and provide electronic access to them.

In 1999, the Corporation instituted an electronic imaging system that was designed to speed processing and control of all Trust forms. In July 2000, a contractor was hired to help in improving the quality of the historic records in the Trust. The contractor is working on technical modifications to the imaging system. This will not only ensure its long-term stabilization, but will also substantially reduce the amount of labor involved in the imaging process. The contractor should complete modifications by August 2001.

In addition to improving the imaging system, the Corporation continued updating and revising the web-based reporting system (WBRS). Through this system, AmeriCorps programs send their enrollment and other Trust data to the Corporation on-line. The improvements have further decreased errors and increased the reliability of data the Corporation depends on to prepare accurate Trust data for the financial audit.

Expanded Access to Momentum

The Momentum Financials off-the-shelf software package was implemented at the Corporation in September 1999. Momentum is now the system used to maintain financial data and produce financial reports. At the time of implementation, all headquarters staff and service center staffs were using the software. During fiscal 2000, the AmeriCorps*NCCC began entering data from their five campus locations. By January 31, 2000, all five were fully using Momentum.

The Corporation has worked closely with American Management Systems (AMS) to enhance the software and make suggestions for further improvements. Specific reports requested by the Corporation (for example, the Grant Status Report and the Transaction Definition Report) were developed by AMS and made part of the reporting application of the software.

Year 2000 Computer Compliance

The implementation of the new financial system, upgrading local and wide-area network hardware and software, and upgrading telecommunications support were among the Corporation's most significant Y2K activities. During the first three months of fiscal 2000 the Corporation completed its preparations for the Y2K moment. That moment was uneventful. No significant operational problems were encountered as a result of Y2K issues.

Table 9-3. Performance Measures: Annual Performance Indicators for Program Administration, Fiscal 2000			
Key Indicators	Goal	Result	Goal Met?
Audit opinion for fiscal year financial statements. Source: <i>Office of Chief Operating Officer. Corporation for National Service.</i>	Obtain an unqualified opinion	Unqualified opinion	YES
Reduction in the number of material weaknesses identified in the financial statement audit. Source: <i>Office of Chief Operating Officer. Corporation for National Service.</i>	Reduce material weaknesses reported in financial statement audit by four	Reduced by four	YES
Operating status of a single, grants management program that provides stewardship over federal funds in a cost-effective manner. Source: <i>Office of Chief Operating Officer. Corporation for National Service.</i>	System analysis and project development initiated by September 2000	Contract awarded and projected initiated in August 2000	YES
Operating status of a new financial management system ("Momentum"). Source: <i>Office of Chief Operating Officer. Corporation for National Service.</i>	Expand access to Momentum to AmeriCorps*NCCC	All NCCC Campuses using Momentum	YES
Y2K status of all Corporation mission-critical systems. Source: <i>Office of Chief Operating Officer. Corporation for National Service.</i>	All systems Y2K compliant	All systems fully compliant	YES

APPENDICES

- A. Data Quality
- B. GPRA Data Call

Appendix A: Data Quality

The Corporation for National Service recognizes the importance of using and reporting quality data on its performance. The Corporation is committed to creating and using data systems that produce timely, accurate, and useful information for the Congress and the American public. In keeping with this commitment, the Corporation wants users of this report to know the sources of the data it contains.

An assessment of each data source used in measuring performance on the annual performance indicators was conducted in 1999 by the Corporation. Interviews were conducted with the program managers and data managers responsible for each of the data sources. These interviews covered several, key criteria for high quality data, including: timeliness, accuracy, consistency, and usefulness. In addition, interviewers covered pending changes in the data sources and any ideas about how to improve them.

The assessment confirmed what was already understood within the Corporation: the quality of the data varies. Some systems generate data in which the user can place the highest confidence. Generally, the best data derive from financial management systems subject to regular, rigorous audit.

Most systems used in the Corporation derive their data from reports provided by grantees, sub-grantees, and members of national service programs. Some of these reports are subject to corroboration through monitoring of local program performance by Corporation representatives. The Corporation has a strategy for monitoring coverage that includes site visits, program evaluations, and audits.

Not all reports from grantees, however, are subject to external corroboration. While the Corporation has reasonable confidence that the data reported by grantees are an accurate representation of their performance, some caution is advisable.

Table A-1. Quality of Data Sources for Annual Performance Indicators	
Data Sources	Discussion
<i>America Reads America Counts. U. S. Department of Education</i>	Each institution signs a formal agreement of participation. These agreements are on file with the U.S. Department of Education, which maintains a database tracking the colleges and universities participating in America Reads America Counts.
<i>AmeriCorps*State and National Program Office</i>	A record of each grant award is tracked in a database maintained by the program office. These data may be confirmed by records of funds disbursement maintained by the Office of Accounting. These records are subject to scrutiny from annual financial audits.
<i>Citizen Scholars Foundation</i>	The Citizen Scholars Foundation maintains the Presidential Service Scholarships through a contract with the Corporation. Staff in the Corporation's Department of Service Learning manage this contract and monitor the data systems the Foundation uses to track the awards.

(continued on next page)

Table A-1. Quality of Data Sources for Annual Performance Indicators	
Data Sources	Discussion
<i>Consolidated Training Accountability Report. NSLI. Corporation for National Service</i>	Training enrollment forms and sign-up sheets are recorded in a database maintained by the National Service Leadership Institute. The data system was created at the suggestion of the Office of the Inspector General to track participation levels.
<i>Department of Service Learning. Corporation for National Service</i>	A record of each grant award is tracked in a database maintained by the program office. These data may be confirmed by records of funds disbursement maintained by the Office of Accounting. These records are subject to scrutiny from annual financial audits.
<i>Financial Status Reports from Grantee</i>	Senior Corps grantees submit a financial status report (FSR) early in the first quarter of the new fiscal year for the previous fiscal year. Corporation Service Centers, under the direction of the Chief Financial Officer, review and process these reports. Each state office does fiscal reviews of grantees. Each office has a monitoring plan to audit each Senior Corps project once every 3 years; 1/3 of projects each year. Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions receive a stipend paid with federal funds. The data on participation levels is accurate because they are part of a financial record keeping system subject to regular audit.
<i>Grants Tracking Database. National Senior Service Corps</i>	A record of each grant award is tracked in a database maintained by the program office. These data may be confirmed by records of funds disbursement maintained by the Office of Accounting. These records are subject to scrutiny from annual financial audits.
<i>Learn and Serve America Grantee Project Progress Reports</i>	Grantees submit these reports to the Department of Service Learning at the end of the fiscal year. The reports are reviewed by program staff who check that the data are complete and reasonable. Resources do not permit systematic monitoring or audits of the information provided by grantees. While the process is fairly consistent, the data useful, the timing appropriate, overall the performance data contained in the progress reports must be considered as estimates with a lower level of accuracy than other systems used by the Corporation.
<i>National Service Trust Database</i>	The National Service Trust provides a secure repository for education awards earned by eligible AmeriCorps participants. It is based on enrollment and exit data provided by AmeriCorps grantees and members. The data are subject to the scrutiny of annual, systematic, financial audit. The systems used to enter and store the data use edit and range checks. In 1999, the data system used optical scanning techniques to enter the data electronically.
<i>NCCC Applicant and Placement Database. Office of AmeriCorps Recruitment. Corporation for National Service</i>	Applicant data are maintained by a contractor and monitored by Corporation staff. The database tracks the status of an applicant from initial submission to final decision. The contractor's work is closely monitored by AmeriCorps*NCCC staff from Corporation headquarters.

(continued on next page)

Table A-1. Quality of Data Sources for Annual Performance Indicators	
Data Sources	Discussion
<i>NCCC Project Completion Report</i>	Each NCCC project files a plan at the beginning of a project and a completion report with headquarters when the project is over. The completion report is signed by an NCCC staff member knowledgeable about the project and a representative of the community served by the project or the partnering organization. This report summarizes the project's accomplishments.
<i>Office of Chief Operating Officer. Corporation for National Service</i>	The performance indicators for Program Administration are qualitative. Performance on the goals is certified by the Chief Operating Officer of the Corporation. This office maintains audit statements, reports, and other documents supporting the performance reports.
<i>Office of Evaluation. Corporation for National Service</i>	The Office of Evaluation begins each year with an annual evaluation plan. Most studies are performed by independent research firms working under contract to the Corporation. The Office of Evaluation tracks studies from initiation to completion. This work is guided by a formal Corporation policy on the conduct of evaluations. Copies of completed studies are available from the Corporation. Evaluation technical assistance is provided through Project Star, a division of Aguirre International. The contractor files regular reports with the Corporation detailing the assistance provided.
<i>Project Profile and Volunteer Activity Survey</i>	These data are reported bi-annually by all Senior Corps grantees to the Corporation (the data do not go to the State Offices). The data are self-reports from grantees and are not subject to audit or scrutiny through site visits. Because RSVP volunteers do not receive any payment for their service, there is no auditable record of participation. Corporation staff clean the data, subjecting it to edit and range checks.
<i>Project Progress Report from Grantee to State Office</i>	Each Senior Corps files an annual work plan with its Corporation State Office. Progress reports are sent to the State Office at least annually, more often for newer grantees. The reports detail the actual progress compared to the plan. The data are subject to corroboration by Corporation State Office personnel as part of their regular schedule of monitoring and site visits.
<i>Quarterly Progress Reports from Grantees</i>	Senior Corps demonstration programs file quarterly progress reports with the program manager in Corporation headquarters. Participants in the Seniors for Schools project receive a stipend and sites are required to keep accurate records of participation and funds disbursement. The Corporation program manager monitors these projects on a regular schedule.
<i>VISTA Applicant and Placement Database. Office of AmeriCorps Recruitment. Corporation for National Service</i>	This system tracks only those applicants who apply through the national recruitment system. Many VISTAs are recruited locally and do not appear in this database. National applications are processed by the five, regional VISTA placement officers. Counts of applicants are aggregated weekly across each cluster and reported to headquarters.

(Table continued on next page)

Table A-1. Quality of Data Sources for Annual Performance Indicators	
Data Sources	Discussion
<i>VISTA Cost Share Database</i>	Corporation State Offices keep on file the formal agreements signed with VISTA Cost Share sponsors. Copies are filed with the VISTA office in Corporation headquarters, which maintains a database tracking sponsors, number of proposed cost-shares, and number of enrolled participants supported by cost-share agreements. These data are not subjected to audit or review outside the office collecting and reporting the information.
<i>VISTA Management System(VMS)</i>	Data on VISTA projects and volunteers is entered into VMS by Corporation State Offices from various forms and data sources. VMS data is subject to regular financial audit because it is the basic source for VISTA volunteer payroll information. In addition, project information is confirmed by Corporation staff through monitoring and site visits.

Appendix B: GPRA Data Call

MEMORANDUM

TO: _____, Director (Acting)
Department of Service-Learning

FROM: GPRA Working Group

DATE: January 25, 2001

SUBJECT: GPRA DATA CALL

The time has come to start collecting information on the results of the Corporation's programs during fiscal 2000. These program outcomes will be a central part of our Fiscal 2000 GPRA Performance Report to Congress.

Our records show that you are responsible for the data related to the following performance indicator(s):

LSA-1	Number of K-12 and higher education grants.
LSA-2	Number of students in projects supported by Learn and Serve America.
LSA-5	Number of Leader Schools selected.
NST-3	Number of high school students receiving Presidential Service Scholarships
IN-2	Number of Leader Schools selected.

We need you to take the following steps:

1. Determine the actual performance on these indicators during fiscal 2000 (October 1, 1999 to September 30, 2000).
2. If data are available for the years before 2000, please report those numbers also.
3. Report the results to me by Thursday, February 8, 2001.
4. Include documentation that will support the results you are reporting. This could involve:
 - Stating the source or sources of the data.
 - The names of the person or organization doing any analysis needed to produce the result.
 - Copies of any tables or computer output showing final tabulations.
 - A copy of any forms that were used to collect the data.

GPRA Data Call
January 25, 2001
Page 2

5. Complete and sign the attached form certifying to the accuracy of the information you are reporting.

I cannot stress enough how important this task is; the GPRA Working Group is counting on you to help us in this critical enterprise.

If you have any questions, please call me at x-223.

Thanks for your help and I look forward to seeing the results.

Attachment

cc:

CERTIFICATION OF DATA RELIABILITY

The information that the Corporation for National Service reports to Congress and the American people in its *Annual Performance Report for Fiscal 2000* should be accurate and reliable. Performance data need not be perfect, but the data should be accurate enough that Corporation managers and decision makers are willing, without marked reluctance, to use the data in carrying out their responsibilities.

This year we are asking data managers to certify with their signatures that the data being reported in the fiscal 2000 report are accurate and reliable. This certification does not require any independent capacity for verifying or validating performance data received from, or based on sources outside the agency. We are asking that you certify to the accuracy and reliability of the data in terms of how the Corporation manages and reports the data. In other words, your certification states that, once the information is reported to the Corporation by a member, a grantee, or other reporting entity, it is subject to appropriate oversight and managed so as to maintain its integrity.

You and your office are responsible for the following performance indicators. Please indicate by checking the appropriate box for each indicator whether or not you are willing to certify its accuracy and verifiability. If you are not willing to certify for some or all of the indicators, please attach an explanation detailing the problems that restrict accuracy and verifiability.

Certification of Accuracy & Verifiability?	Performance Indicators	Fiscal 2000 Results
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	LSA-1 Number of K-12 and higher education grants.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	LSA-2 Number of students in projects supported by Learn and Serve America.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	LSA-5 Number of Leader Schools selected.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	NST-3 Number of high school students receiving Presidential Service Scholarships.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	IN-2 Number of Leader Schools selected.	

If you are willing to certify that the data planned for reporting on these indicators in the *Fiscal 2000 Performance Report* are accurate, verifiable, and useful, please sign below. Return this form to David Rymph, Rm. 9611 by Thursday, February 8, 2001.

Amy Cohen, Director (Acting)
Department of Service-Learning

Name and Title

Signature and Date

CORPORATION

FOR NATIONAL

 SERVICE

Corporation for National Service
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525
(202) 606-5000
TTY (202) 565-2799
www.nationalservice.org